


3 1761 11631094 7





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2023 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761116310947>













No. 29

N° 29

ISSN 1180-2987

# Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

# Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

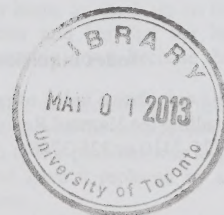
Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

## Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

## Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 23 April 2013

Mardi 23 avril 2013



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 23 April 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 23 avril 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Please bow your heads.

*Prayers.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### STRONGER PROTECTION FOR ONTARIO CONSUMERS ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 RENFORÇANT LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR ONTARIEN

Ms. MacCharles moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 55, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 55, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les agences de recouvrement, la Loi de 2002 sur la protection du consommateur et la Loi de 2002 sur le courtage commercial et immobilier et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Debate?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Speaker, I should mention off the top that I'll be sharing time with the member from Brampton West, who is the parliamentary assistant to my Ministry of Consumer Services.

Last week, Speaker, our government, as you know, introduced the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013. I rose in the House to talk about how we are addressing some key areas of Ontario's marketplace to make it fair, to provide more choice and to boost consumer confidence. I rise again today to stress how we are delivering our commitment to consumers in Ontario.

I spoke in this House last week about how our bill proposes to do four very different things in the area of consumer protection. The first is to curb aggressive, high-pressure, door-to-door sales tactics, especially for the sale of water heaters;

The second is to protect vulnerable, indebted consumers against the misleading and abusive practices of some companies that offer debt settlement services;

Third, to provide stronger safeguards to strengthen the integrity of real estate bidding practices; and

Fourth, to give home sellers more power to negotiate flexible, lower-cost arrangements when using a real estate professional.

Today I'd like to share with the House a few additional details of the reforms. In doing so, I want to emphasize how important it is that we pass these proposed reforms to protect and strengthen the consumer rights of all people in Ontario.

In terms of door-to-door sales—and as I've outlined previously in this House, our bill aims to curb aggressive door-to-door sales tactics and to help homeowners make informed choices. Our proposed new rules, if passed, would:

First, double the existing 10-day cooling-off period to 20 days for water heater sales, providing consumers with more time to consider their decision;

Second, it would ban delivery and installation of water heaters during the new 20-day cooling-off period;

Third, allow rules requiring companies to confirm sales by making scripted and recorded telephone calls to the customer, and that key contract terms are disclosed in clear, easy-to-understand language; and

Finally, provide new customer protections when the rules are not followed, such as requiring the supplier to pay all cancellation fees when the 20-day cooling-off period is not observed.

I'd like to share with you some examples of why we need to move ahead on these reforms now, examples that, unfortunately, we know are not uncommon in this province. Let me tell you about the case of a single mother in the GTA who works hard to provide a home, food and clothes for her four children. She had just had her water heater replaced a few months earlier when she was visited by a door-to-door salesperson. She was led to believe he was from a company that had just done the replacement and was at her home to check up on the new water heater. This inspector told her that her house was in serious danger of burning down because the new water heater was faulty.

Of course, the single mother became frightened for her family's safety and believed the salesperson when he told her that the solution to her problem was to get rid of the old water heater and have it replaced by a new one—immediately, of course.

Well, you can imagine what happened, Speaker. The inspector was, in fact, from a different company than the one that had done the original installation, and the need for urgent replacement was indeed a hoax. But sure enough, the old heater was taken out and a new one was put in its place—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I'd ask the members, if they must continue their conversations, that they take them outside. I can barely hear the speaker.



Please continue.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you, Speaker.

So now this single mother with four children must deal with two companies demanding payment for two different water heater contracts, and this is not an isolated incident. We have all, sadly, read media reports about this kind of thing happening on a regular basis.

The hot water heater salespeople who are looking to take advantage of vulnerable or unsuspecting customers use many tactics to try to secure signatures on contracts. We know that a common trick is to show up at the front door and claim to be from the local municipality or the homeowner's current water heater provider. I've also heard of claims that people are representing the government, which is indeed not the case. Sometimes salespeople say that new regulations have been passed that mean a homeowner needs to replace a heater's venting system to comply or that testing has shown the heater to be using energy inefficiently. Another common tactic is to inspect the heater and claim that it's full of silt, even producing a jar of murky water as so-called proof.

When we talk about questionable practices on the part of water heater companies, these are the kinds of things we're referring to. They are the kind of shady practices that have led our ministry to receive more than 3,200 written complaints and inquiries about door-to-door water heaters in 2012, making this the second-largest source of consumer complaints in the province.

Last week, two of my colleagues in opposition, the member for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry and the member for Beaches-East York, provided comments in this House about the bill, specifically in the area of door-to-door sales. I would like to address their comments here today.

0910

One of the main concerns expressed was that—and I'll paraphrase here—the 20-day cooling-off period does not protect consumers sufficiently. The member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry in particular stated, "Once a new heater is installed following the 20 days, if the consumer hasn't sorted out matters with the original supplier, they will face some severe penalties. Cancellation charges can run into the hundreds of dollars, and moreover, suppliers are free to charge outrageous amounts for damages, such as scratches on a 10-year-old tank that is only going to be recycled anyway." While I appreciate the member's comment, I want to respond to this and how it, in fact, misses the point of our proposed legislation.

This bill does not only double the current 10-day cooling-off period when a consumer can cancel a contract with no questions asked, but it also prohibits the installation or the delivery of the water heater. Currently, replacement water heaters are often installed within the 10-day cooling-off period, really going against the spirit of the current rules and making it almost impossible for a homeowner to cancel a contract. Our proposed legislation, if passed, will make it possible simply to cancel the contract if there are any problems with it before the

heater is ever installed. If there are any concerns with a contract, anything that does not seem right or simply a feeling on the part of the consumer that the contract is something they have been coerced or pressured into and do not want to continue with, it will simply be a matter of cancelling it during the 20-day cooling-off period. And if, contrary to our proposed rules, a water heater is installed during that 20-day period, the water heater company, and not the customer, will be responsible for the cost of removing it and all of its associated costs.

Anyone can feel pressured at the door by aggressive salespeople, and anyone can make purchases under pressure that later they realize were ill advised. In fact, many of us read the media reports in May of last year of seven charges of attempted fraud being laid against two men who approached homeowners in Toronto, telling people at the door that they worked for a well-known gas company. These salespersons told homeowners that their water heater needed replacing and, according to reports from the police, they coerced them into replacing them via a signed contract. At least once, unfortunately, Speaker, two victims were assaulted as part of this coercion. So we're looking at a situation where not only do consumers have to be worried about being taken advantage of through dubious contracts; in some instances, their safety is at risk as well.

As I pointed out in the House last week when I introduced this bill, and as I emphasize here for you today, our proposed reforms in this area will, if passed, bring a solution to a very real and pressing problem. And I'm pleased to note that this bill has support. The Homeowner Protection Centre has launched a website at [waterheaterdoortodoor.com](http://waterheaterdoortodoor.com), where people can send their MPP a note asking that we pass this bill quickly. I want to thank this organization for their support, and I urge all members of the Legislature to pay attention to the many emails that I expect you'll be getting.

In terms of debt settlement, Speaker, I brought to the House's attention last week the fact that some companies that provide debt settlement services in Ontario offer to dramatically reduce a person's debt by negotiating with their creditors, provided that the consumer pays a hefty upfront fee. I stress that for some consumers in financial difficulty, this upfront fee can force them into even more debt. The reason for this is that some companies offering debt settlement services charge high administrative fees and may not deliver on their promised services. These companies can hide behind the hidden contract clauses that reduce or even eliminate the value of the original service offered. Simply put, you think you're getting something by signing one of these contracts, but you are not getting what you expected or what you were promised.

Again, these stories we've been hearing about and reading about are very disturbing, and all the more for being so common. Just last week in the newspaper, a story was carried about a woman in her late 20s, working two jobs in Toronto and simply trying to keep up with the cost of living. She had compiled \$18,000 in credit card



debt and, looking for some relief, she had turned to a debt settlement company that had been advertised on Facebook. These ads are very common, and they all promise in one way or another to help reduce debt and to deal directly with a person's creditors. This young woman paid the company offering to settle her debt almost \$3,800 to help her, and what happened? She found herself facing a lawsuit from the bank she owed money to, and most of the nearly \$4,000 she had paid to the company had been swallowed up by fees. Now this young woman has unfortunately filed for bankruptcy.

Here's another case to consider, Speaker, reported in the Canadian Business magazine: In this instance, a woman nearing retirement age who lives just outside Ottawa had amassed a sizable unsecured debt that had grown to more than \$65,000 in 2011. She enrolled in a 36-month program with a very well-known debt settlement company in late 2012, just last fall. Under the terms of this program, she agreed to pay over \$1,000 a month into a settlement account. For the first three months, all of that money went to service and maintenance fees. For the next 13 months, the plan was for more than half of the monthly payments to go to the company, and more than a year into the plan this woman would have been contributing money mostly into her own savings account. Things never made it to that point, because she was hit with collection calls and court actions before the money she was paying to the debt settlement company ever got to her creditors. By the spring, a large bank to whom she owed more than \$30,000 on a line of credit had garnished her wages. Other creditors were telling her they wouldn't deal with the debt settlement company. This woman left the program, saying she paid \$4,500 in fees in exchange for a few phone calls to creditors and not much else. She ended up paying money she did not have for relief she did not get. Again, this woman has declared bankruptcy.

Our proposed bill aims to help indebted people like this who are some of our most vulnerable consumers in the province. To protect consumers against misleading practices related to some of these services, the bill proposes to prohibit payment of upfront fees before services are provided and to limit the amount of fees charged overall. Both of these limits would be set by regulation. It would also allow debtors to cancel their agreement without a reason within 10 days after receiving a copy of the agreement, and it would prohibit misleading sales practices and advertising. This is a critical point. We have all seen the ads on TV saying that your debt can be reduced by 50%, 60%, maybe 70%. "Pay only pennies on the dollar," they say. Well, we are going to stop them from saying things that are simply not true. If debt settlement companies fail to follow these rules, our new legislation would enable the revocation of their mandatory licences, further protecting consumers from false and misleading claims.

I should say, Speaker, with all of these reforms, our intent is not to target reputable practices. There are many reputable companies out there. Whether we're talking

about door-to-door sales or debt settlement companies, there are unfortunately companies that are not reputable, and this is what I'm talking about today.

The third dimension of the bill is on real estate reform. Ontario's real estate professionals are among the best, and our government has confidence in the effective role of the Real Estate Council of Ontario and the very good role they play in regulating this sector. However, there are some sales professionals who do not conduct their transactions in a way that is particularly honest or respectful of both people looking to buy or to sell a home. As the member for Beaches-East York rightly pointed out last week upon the introduction of our bill, the process of buying or selling a home can be extremely stressful. He describes very well the sinking feeling you get in the pit of your stomach that you've been had when it's all over. Hopefully some people's experiences are a little more positive, but it is a stressful period, when one is making such a large investment. The problem lies in the fact that there are both home sellers and buyers who rely on information about bids that come from the agents themselves and are never really 100% sure about the true nature of the offers that are coming in or, indeed, if the offer has really ever been made. This makes the competitive nature of bidding all the more stressful, as anyone who's ever been a part of it can attest to.

#### 0920

Many of us will have read newspaper reports last summer of some prospective homeowners who were amazed to discover they had paid \$90,000 over the asking price on a Toronto home, even though they were the only bidder. That's correct: These people were effectively bidding against themselves, Speaker, because they'd been told there were two other offers, so ultimately they offered more money than necessary—a lot more money.

We propose to do something about this, and it's a pretty straightforward solution to the problem. The solution is transparency. To maintain public confidence in real estate transactions when multiple bids on the same property are involved, our bill will require real estate salespeople and brokers acting on behalf of a buyer to only present an offer that is in writing. Salespeople and brokers would also be prohibited from suggesting or claiming that a written offer exists when one does not. The legislation would, if passed, also require brokerages acting on behalf of the seller to retain copies of all written offers related to the sale and purchase of a property.

I've had some feedback and some questions about this proposal from people saying, "Well, aren't all of these offers in writing already?" I believe they are, but the difference is what this legislation would allow, and that is that a person who has made a written offer to purchase a particular home could, under this legislation, ask the registrar at the Real Estate Council of Ontario to work with the seller's brokerage to determine the number of offers that were received and to report that number. That's what is different from the current provisions right now.

As well, a separate amendment would give homebuyers and sellers more power to negotiate lower-cost



services by removing the ban on charging both fees and commissions. Allowing agents and brokers to decide how they will be paid makes sense. Why should the government be telling real estate agents and brokers how they can get paid for their services? This reduction in regulation and red tape will better serve consumers and have the potential to unleash innovation and creativity in the sector. This change will make Ontario's real estate marketplace consistent with all other provinces in the country, while responding to a recommendation of the Competition Bureau.

These proposed reforms build on steps our government has already taken to strengthen consumer protection for people in Ontario. Our review of the Ontario Condominium Act, 1998, is well under way, with residents and stakeholders engaged in helping us make the marketplace fairer for all involved. Our engagement process is not only about government listening to owners and stakeholders; it's about members of the condominium community listening to each other. It's about building consensus among different groups who are setting the direction and shaping the proposed changes to the Condominium Act. This way, it is providing consumer protections via a process that's truly an example of democracy in action, Speaker. Our approach is working.

Earlier this year, our government announced its plan to look at qualifications for home inspectors, to ensure that when people make a final key decision about buying a house, they can do so with full confidence that the information about the state of the house is reliable. Again, we're helping people in this province with major decisions about their lives, ensuring that the purchases they make are safe, fair and informed. The Ministry of Consumer Services is working to help consumers better understand their rights and to help businesses understand their responsibilities.

As I mentioned in the House last week, these are the first of a series of strong consumer actions we are taking to make our marketplace safe, fair and one where all people in this province can shop with confidence and make investments in homes with confidence as well. I am confident that these reforms will give the people of Ontario stronger consumer protection, while building consumer confidence in the marketplace. They would ultimately help strengthen the economy of our great province.

I call on all parties today in the House to pass this important bill quickly, so that consumers of Ontario can benefit from the necessary protections this bill would provide.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Madam Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** You're sharing your time?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I intended to, but my parliamentary assistant has unfortunately not arrived yet. Perhaps I could continue until he arrives, if that's okay?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Yes.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you. I know my parliamentary assistant—

**Mr. Rick Bartolucci:** He's out talking to real estate agents right now, right?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** He could be.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** We could talk about gridlock, because I know my parliamentary assistant—he's a commuter like I am. I know the challenge of getting here. It can take up to an hour and a half each way every day.

So let me just recap, if I may, and talk about the extent of the challenge for us in Ontario when it comes to water heaters, if I could perhaps give another illustration about how our legislation can address that problem, Speaker. You heard from me earlier the case where the government laid charges this past February against a company that was selling door-to-door heaters. In fact, it laid 63 charges. These charges were laid after the Ministry of Consumer Services received complaints from people in the Ottawa area. The company's salespersons led them to believe they were from the homeowners' current service provider of their water heater. They would come to the home to do their services upgrades or inspections mandated by the government; neither things, in this case, were true, Speaker.

After signing contracts, the customers allege that the company removed and replaced their water heaters only to find themselves being double-billed by the existing provider and a new company. This creates confusion in the marketplace. It does not help consumer confidence. And of course, paying two bills can get very expensive when the customer tries to ultimately sort out what happened. Many of us, I think, if we're honest, do sign contracts and don't read all the fine print. But can you imagine when you now have two contracts with fine print to sort out when it comes to water heaters?

What we're trying to do is help on a number of fronts by doubling the cooling-off period, as I mentioned before. We'll give consumers more time to consider the contract they have signed. If something doesn't seem right, they have twice the time to get in touch with a friend or a neighbour or the Ministry of Consumer Services for advice and see if they have been taken advantage of in similar ways.

Speaker, when I think of door-to-door sales and water heater sales—and some people say to me, "Well, why are people even answering the door?" That's obviously a very personal decision whether people answer the door, and there are many reputable speakers at the door. But this provision to increase the cooling-off time, I think, provides greater protection for all of us. But in particular, when you think about seniors, when you think of new Canadians, when you think of Ontarians where English may not be their first language, I think this additional time is very helpful for people to confer with their family and friends about a contract that they perhaps signed. I think we can all benefit from that additional cooling-off period, Speaker.

The proposed legislation will also prevent a company from hurrying in to deliver and install a new water heater

in the first few days after a contract is signed. I want to emphasize that in the past, companies were able to do this, because they knew once the appliance was installed, it would be very, very expensive for the customer to replace it. Now, by putting the expense of the removal on the shoulders of the water heater company, the company looking for this kind of quick installation will no longer be able to burden the customer with such an expense. It's good news.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Pardon? I think I'm hearing some yays of support, Speaker, from the opposition.

I think, Speaker, my parliamentary assistant would like to say a few words. I'll just give him a moment to get settled and to pick up where I'm leaving off and where I'm about to start, which is to speak a bit more about our proposals on debt settlement.

I will just conclude my remarks by again emphasizing that we are not targeting reputable companies, Speaker. Companies of all sizes in Ontario help drive our economy, but unfortunately some of the bad practices I've identified hurt our economy and hurt jobs in Ontario. Our intent is to strengthen consumer protection, which will strengthen the marketplace and provide more confidence for everyone in Ontario. With that, I'll conclude my remarks. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today.

0930

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Brampton West.

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I rise in support of the announcement made by the Minister of Consumer Services last week in the House on the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013. This bill proposes to do four very important things in the area of consumer protection. I would like to offer support through some specific examples of how we're going to strengthen the rights of consumers through the provisions of this bill.

One of the four key aspects of our consumer reform package is our proposal to curb aggressive, high-pressure door-to-door sales tactics, especially for the sale of water heaters. I can personally attest that I have had the experience of these salespeople coming to my door. They look very official, and for a second you almost believe that they're from the local municipality or the city, that they're real and that they're there to check up on how your water heater is working. As a matter of fact, one time I wasn't home and my wife did let them in. I arrived about half an hour later. She didn't sign anything, because I always tell my kids and my wife—and I would urge the viewers that before you sign anything, you do have a right, especially in this bill, where we're extending the cooling-off period to 20 days—you have 20 days before any legal agreement comes into effect. One of the things I can say this morning is that this bill may seem like a small thing, but to a community like mine, where a lot of new immigrants who don't understand English—they see a badge with a picture and often a vest of some sort to portray that they're there from official government

authority. So people do get duped, but unfortunately a lot of people don't contact our offices because they don't know; they think this is totally legal and that this is what they have to do, when in fact that's not the case. I would urge people to contact their MPPs if they have any questions, because we're putting an end to this type of practice of actually bullying people into signing agreements that they don't have to.

Again, we're dealing with water heaters in this act because we have heard from many Ontarians about the problems and the financial hardship they would go through, the pressure tactics that people use to make people sign documents that they don't have to sign. The minister has already detailed the extent to which door-to-door sales of water heaters has been a serious problem in Ontario, and I would like to make some specific illustrations about our proposed legislation that will address this problem. Many of us in the House today have heard the case in which our government laid 63 charges this past February against a company that was selling water heaters door to door. These charges were laid after the Ministry of Consumer Services received complaints from people in the Ottawa area that the company's salespeople led them to believe that they were from the homeowner's current service provider and had come to their home to do service upgrades or inspections mandated by the government. Neither of these things were true. After signing contracts, the customers alleged that the company removed and replaced their water heaters, only to find themselves being double-billed by their existing provider and a new company. The result is confusion on the part of the customer, and of course paying two bills can get very expensive while the customer tries to sort out what happened.

How will our proposed new bill help in this regard? What it will do is fourfold. By doubling the cooling-off period from 10 to 20 days, we will give consumers more time to consider the contract that they have signed. If something does not seem right, they now have twice the time to get in touch with a friend, a neighbour or the Ministry of Consumer Services for advice and perhaps to see if they have been taken advantage of in a similar way by the company.

One of the things that's not mentioned in what I said is that they can always contact their MPP, because all three parties have constituency offices. I believe our constituency assistants do a wonderful job, and they're very well trained to make certain inquiries, because often people have difficulties contacting their local government or the ministry, because of a number of reasons. In my area, one of the obstacles is the language barrier, and I'm sure that all of us here—our community staff reflect the face of our community. Once again, I cannot reiterate enough how important it is, not only on this matter but on any other issue that people have questions about: They should feel free to contact the local constituency office of their MPP.

The proposed new legislation will also prevent a company from hurrying in to deliver and install the new



water heater in the first few days after a contract is signed. In the past, companies were able to do this because they knew that once the appliance was installed, it would be very expensive for the customer to replace it. Now, by putting the expense of the removal on the shoulders of the water heater company, any company looking for this kind of quick installation will not be able to burden the customer with expense.

Perhaps most importantly, the proposed new legislation will compel companies to follow up on signed contracts with phone calls to the customer. These calls will have to follow a pre-set script, and it will have to be recorded. So there will be a record of the follow-up, and any attempts to further misrepresent the terms of the contract will be on record.

As well, we propose to require that all key terms of the contract are actually spelled out clearly to the customer in plain and simple language, so that the chance of there being a misunderstanding about what the customer is signing is reduced. The end result would be that Ontario's consumers would have a lot more confidence in considering a replacement to their water heater. If that replacement is actually justified, as the minister has stated several times, having the confidence that they're spending their hard-earned money wisely is something which all Ontarians believe in.

The second key component of our reform package is our proposal to protect vulnerable indebted customers against misleading and abusive practices of some companies that offer debt settlement services. Again, this is a huge issue in my riding and, I'm sure, in many other ridings, especially in communities where new immigrants have come to settle. I speak and understand more than one language, and I listen to the various ethnic radio and TV programming. On almost every radio show or ethnic TV show, I hear advertisements of promises of "up to 75% off your debt, and the remainder of your payments will be very small payments so you can live a happy life and you don't have to worry about anything."

That's very misleading, especially for new immigrants who come to this country in hopes of a good life—in hopes of the Canadian dream. They come and they hear this television ad or they hear this radio ad that 75% of their debt—up to 75%; the misleading fact is "up to" 75% of their debt—can be cancelled, and the remainder they'll be allowed to pay in small payments. It's very, very misleading, and I would urge all people watching this program to be very, very vigilant when they think about entering into these types of contracts, because I can tell you that no finance company or creditor is going to just say, "Yes, we'll give you 75% off if you agree to pay the rest of the 25% in small payments." It's just too good to be true.

0940

The minister has related some instances of these practices and how they have seriously affected consumers in this province, and I would like to share some of the illustrations of how our proposed new bill will help the people of Ontario stay protected against dubious settlement companies.

One of the things I wanted to mention today was that these debt settlement practices often have an impact on a person's credit rating. I'm a believer that once you get bad credit, it sticks with you wherever you go to get financing. Somewhere down the line, if someone is going to give you money, they're going to want to know how honest you are and about your track record of repayment in the past. So that's another very important thing to think about before someone gets into a debt payment plan with some of these fly-by-night people who have set up shop here in southern Ontario.

One of the other things that I have learned as we've worked through this bill is that companies from the UK and the US have come and set up shop, and it's just incredible the type of schemes that they offer to people who are very vulnerable. They're under a lot of stress to meet these payments, and sometimes it's out of their control, because they may lose a job due to a family illness, and they want to get out of this situation. Sometimes you get into a situation where you only want to hear the positive. As human beings, sometimes we block out the negative aspect of what's being told to us. That's also something to keep in mind.

Earlier this year, the Ministry of Consumer Services released the story of one Ontario consumer who attempted to work with a company offering debt settlement services to help negotiate an affordable monthly payment program to settle debts of about \$11,000 with his creditors. The debt settlement company said it negotiated a settlement of about \$4,700 and charged the customer a fee of about \$2,500. The company assured the consumer that all his creditors had accepted the settlement offer. One company, however, had not accepted the settlement offer, and the consumer was served with court papers. The consumer contacted the debt settlement company for instructions on what to do next and was provided with a number of forms to defend against the court action. The debt settlement company then sent the consumer an email informing him they had received his cancellation notice. The consumer had never sent the debt settlement company a cancellation notice. Further calls and messages to the company were not returned. The consumer's credit score was significantly damaged, and the consumer approached a not-for-profit company for help. This is a classic case of one of these companies failing to provide the exact services it promised—by dealing with some but not all of the customer's creditors—but still charging a hefty upfront fee.

Our new bill would prevent people like this from having to pay upfront fees to a company on the promise of debt settlement. Furthermore, it would limit the overall amount of fees that the consumer could be charged. It would prevent them from being misled by deceiving advertising, as I said before, Madam Speaker. The ministry is currently in the process of consulting to determine the amount of fees that will be charged, but it will be far less than what is being charged now, and there would have to be a solid rationale for the amount of fees that would be charged.

Furthermore, this consumer would have had up to 10 days after receiving and signing a contract from the company offering debt-settling solutions to cancel the agreement without a reason, and it would prohibit misleading sales practices and advertising. Again, just as with the water heaters, there is a cooling-off period. The consumer does have the choice of cancelling within the 10-day cooling-off period. If debt settlement companies fail to follow these rules, the new legislation would enable the revocation of their mandatory licences, further protecting the consumer from false or misleading claims.

The third aspect of this bill deals with real estate reforms. As the minister stated, our government is confident that the vast majority of real estate professionals in Ontario act ethically and professionally and that the Real Estate Council of Ontario, or RECO, is doing a good job of monitoring professional conduct among the nearly 60,000 realtors in this province.

Our proposed new bill, however, seeks to address the problem of those who work in ways that are not completely above board. One of the ways we would seek to ensure transparency and build consumer confidence is through the introduction of legislation to eliminate the so-called practice of phantom bidding. Sometimes when we are looking for a home, which I believe, for most of us, is our most valued asset—it's the biggest thing we buy, and sometimes we fall in love with a home because of the neighbourhood it's in or because of the attributes of the house; it's been renovated well, and maybe the community or the schools around. So we really want the home. Sometimes you get really passionate about the home that you have looked at and you are willing to do anything. So real estate agents sort of take advantage of, again, the vulnerability. They can pretty much tell that this couple or this family really likes this home and they're willing to pay any price, so they hike up the bid by saying, "Well, there's all these other bids. You better bid above this price, or else this home is going to be sold."

One of the ways we would seek to ensure transparency and build consumer confidence is through the introduction of legislation to eliminate the so-called practice of phantom bidding. We know that about 5,000 of the 15,000 inquiries that RECO received last year came from people who were simply overwhelmed by the multiple bids process when it comes to buying and selling a home.

This process can get all the more confusing when there is a heightened sense of competition around a property. We have heard many stories from hot real estate markets in which people looking to buy a home drive up their offer because they think they need to top a bid coming in on the same property, although these buyers never actually see the offer. This can lead to confusion and the sense that accurate information may not have been shared.

What we are proposing in our new bill is that in real estate transactions where multiple bids on the same property are involved, real estate salespeople or brokers acting on behalf of a buyer would have to present only

offers that are in writing. There would be no more situations where homebuyers have to bid against bids they cannot see. It also means that salespeople and brokers would be prohibited from suggesting or claiming that a written offer exists when one does not.

The fourth aspect of this bill deals with real estate fees and commissions. Our bill, if passed, would allow real estate agents to charge homebuyers and sellers working with them in a combination of a percentage and a fixed amount when pricing their services. Like many purchases we make every day, consumers will be better able to select the service they want while not paying for the ones they don't want. Currently, the province does not allow real estate professionals to charge a fee and a commission for service. Typically, consumers pay for all-inclusive services from real estate professionals through a commission based on the sale price.

#### 0950

Under the proposed legislation, a real estate professional would be able to charge a fee plus a commission or a combination of both for the services they offer. These services can include staging a home; taking out an ad in a newspaper, magazine or online; or arranging an open house. Traditionally, this has all been part of the real estate professional's commission, but we are proposing to change that to allow the consumer more flexibility in what he or she wants an agent or broker to do. We believe that this move has the potential to unleash a great deal of innovation and creativity in the real estate sector, and it will make Ontario's real estate marketplace consistent with all other provinces. As well, this proposed change responds to a recommendation of the federal Competition Bureau.

The proposed reforms the minister and I have spoken about today build on steps our government has already taken to strengthen consumer protection for the people of Ontario. I just want to reiterate and go over what I've discussed this morning with respect to this bill. It's a very important bill. Sometimes we try and do these big things in this House, but these things are the actual things that people really see and touch every day; for example, the water heater bill.

I can just imagine someone new to the country: They buy a house with whatever money they have spent, they have their first job—not earning very much money—and they come into this very caring and compassionate society that we have. Then, they are duped by somebody, a thug coming to their door and pressuring them to come into their house to do something they don't have to do. Often people are stuck with two or three bills.

I've heard so many horror stories where a significant portion of income for some of these newcomers, and for other people as well—I'm speaking about my riding because there is a huge influx of settlement by new immigrants—a huge part of their family income goes to these shady deals: the phone companies, and the water heaters, of course. The second part of this bill deals with debt settlement agencies. Again, it's another bunch of, I would say, scammers that are popping up with these misleading



ads. I have never seen these ads before, and it's a real danger.

These are the things that push people down, because their credit rating—they give all these promises, and often people don't know what their rights are. Once they are told this happy, good-news story—"It's going to be a happily-ever-after life after you sign these papers"—it's human nature; I know people don't tend to look at the negatives, especially if they don't know the negatives and the impact that a bad credit rating is going to have on them and their families.

These are, I would say, life-lasting effects that these types of agreements have. Of course, I realize that some people do go into hardship because of loss of employment and unexpected expense—illness in the family—and that's why we have laws like this. We're not against people who play by the rules, and that's why we have protection for consumers who do fall into these situations. They can access debt settlement services, but we need these reforms so people don't get ripped off, frankly.

The third aspect deals with real estate agents, where traditionally it's been commissions only, as per the Real Estate Council of Ontario—RECO—but in this legislation we plan to change that to have a service and commission mix. For example, if your real estate agent wants to charge you for the amount of ads that he places in the local paper or magazine or online, or for the number of open houses that he hosts, because if it's a high-end home, sometimes he or she may be required to put a very expensive ad in a national newspaper or an international newspaper, that's something that, maybe, would not be so reasonable when charging a commission. That takes into effect the changes that are occurring because many years ago there wasn't online advertising. Things have changed; newspapers are online. A lot of people don't get their newspaper at their door. Most people read their paper online. So, it's those changes that this bill is taking into account.

Madam Speaker, these are the first of a series of strong consumer actions we're taking to make our marketplace safe, fair, and one where all people in this province can shop in confidence. So, with that, Madam Speaker, those are my comments. This is a win-win for all Ontarians.

Again, I can't express enough in simple words: There are scammers out there; there are shysters. Our office can be your first place of contact because we are there to help you. From all three parties—all MPPs have constituency offices and we have people who work in our offices that I would hope know the community that all of us represent. We can, sometimes, have access to government resources, different ministries, and we can access them much quicker. There is that added effect of a call coming from an MPP's office to a certain ministry where there may be a problem.

So I do encourage consumers to use our offices, use our services. We're there to help you, especially with what has been dealt with in this bill, because oftentimes

people think they can take advantage of you because they think you don't know any better. That can be true in certain instances, but we're there to help, and the ministry is there to help. There are all kinds of other avenues that people can take.

It's my sincere hope—like I said, it's win-win legislation—that all three parties will support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

The member from—I've forgotten—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No big deal.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. Sometimes that's the impression we get from the members in Toronto; they think of the rural areas as "no big deal."

I'm happy to rise to comment on the bill, and we're glad to see this bill come forth. We understand water heater rental was the number two complaint received by consumer services, so this bill is well overdue. I guess that has been a complaint for some time.

We like to see the cooling off period; I think that's a good idea to double it. But we wonder why they haven't gone back and addressed the issue with the cancellation of existing services because we've also heard that that's a major complaint as well, where any company that has existing contracts, sometimes, it's very hard to get out of the deal. They can already be of a long term. One would wonder if the assets have not already been paid off.

Certainly, the debt settlement, you don't have to go very far. You can pick up any paper and see the ads. No question that there are a lot of good companies out there, but unfortunately there are always the ones that we need protection from. I think this bill goes a good way to providing some of that protection, but we also have to go further, and it will be interesting when we give our comments throughout; we'll give some advice to this government, where they might go through committee. We would like to see some of those revisions made to strengthen this bill and protect the consumers out there who sometimes, through no fault of their own, are running into very professional scammers. It can be difficult. We would like to proceed through that.

I guess my time is up, so we'll be looking forward to that time.

1000

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Spadina.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

Does anybody remember Consumers' Gas? Those were the days, eh? That was a time when we, the government, controlled it, ran it, and it was called Consumers' Gas; and as far as I can remember, there was not one complaint.

Then we got Mike Harris. Does anybody remember him?

*Interjections.*



**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** People remember that too.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I know; I realize. That's why I mention it, because everybody remembers him with such fondness. He decided to deregulate the system, you will recall, which is why we have so many problems, because "We can rely on the private sector to do it better." He created, God bless him, 14 different distributors, each with their own unique way of scamming the consumer. God bless. Mike Harris, he had it right when he was here, and now we're dealing with the fallout of that.

Remember that in January, the Ontario Energy Board started enforcing a new law to curb abuses in the sale of fixed-price energy deals. What did they do after that? Many door-to-door marketers switched to water heaters instead; they moved from one scam to the other. Years later, the government says, "Oh, we've got to close this loophole as well," which is what they're doing today, and we're supportive of that because the Ontario government announced that it will regulate misleading sales of water heater rental contracts, and we think this is a good thing.

There's more to be done; there is so much more to be done. I only have nine seconds and I can't talk about it, but hopefully when we send it to committee, we'll do more—with the willingness of the minister, I'm assuming.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise to show my support of Bill 55.

As my colleague from Brampton West said earlier about this particular bill in terms of the high-pressure tactics being used by some of the door-to-door salespeople, in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, we have a very frail seniors' population and also a very diverse community that often calls my office, complaining about these door-to-door salespeople. The challenge here is that the contract—many of these seniors and the newcomers coming to our community don't understand what they're signing.

I remember recently we had a call that the wife of this newcomer signed a contract without knowing what she was signing because she believed the salesperson was selling something good for her home. Little did she know she was going to be stuck and locked into a contract for 10 years with a higher rate than normal. We, through this bill, could help consumers with this particular issue.

The proposed legislation—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Consumers' Gas. Those were the days.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** That's showing your years, my colleague opposite.

The concern with regard to consumer protection is the fact that the proposed legislation, if passed, will prohibit delivery—after signing the contract, first of all—and extend it 20 days. That's a really, really important piece, because we need to have a second thought after we sign a contract.

The other piece of concern is that the contract must be in clear language. How many times do you see your cellphone bill or another contract you've signed—"What is that?" And some of us are pretty well educated. I have a master's degree in nursing. I can't even understand what they're writing. They must have really good lawyers out there.

At the end of the day, this bill is to protect the consumer.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I commend the minister, who's here today, as well as the member from Brampton West. The bill itself, Bill 55, does, I think, address some important issues with respect to the collection agencies that we've heard so much about, as well as the Consumer Protection Act, as well as the real estate brokers act.

That being said, I want to correct the record because the member from Trinity-Spadina spoke—really, he didn't address the issue, but what he did is he tried to impugn motives or impugn something. I think it's important for the viewers of Ontario to recognize that here's the same member who was in the cabinet for Bob Rae that opened up every single contract in Ontario. Now, here's the real issue: He tries to blame everything in Ontario—the real Liberal here was the Premier with the NDP, Bob Rae.

Really, I'm talking about the bill here, but I want to correct the record. It is so false, what he said. I think the member from Trinity-Spadina should get up and apologize because we're talking about Bill 55, consumer protection. The government that almost destroyed Ontario was under Bob Rae, and it was NDP. I want you to stick to the topic and try to tell the truth to the people of Ontario. I wouldn't trust either one of them. They're now a coalition government. That's the issue.

What we should have is a cooling-off period.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Trinity started it. I'm cleansing the record; that's what I'm doing.

**Interjection:** Cleanse away.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Cleansing the record.

Now, I do support many of the initiatives in the bill. I would say the cooling-off period is very important, whether it is against the water heater people who are troubling people across Ontario, or changes to the Condominium Act for that matter or the real estate brokers act on clear disclosure.

But it's unfair for the member from Trinity-Spadina to spoil this debate this morning.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order. Order.

The minister has two minutes to respond.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you, Speaker.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Member for Trinity–Spadina, come to order.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I beg your pardon, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Minister.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you, Speaker. I'm happy to do the wrap-up on the discussion about this very important and very exciting bill.

I want to thank the MPP from Brampton West. I really like how he spoke about how this bill, if passed, will support consumers in a real and practical way to deal with the daily irritants that many consumers face, whether it's about the door-to-door sales of water heaters, whether it's about the debt settlement provisions or whether it's about the changes on the real estate side, which includes, quite frankly, reducing red tape and regulatory burden for real estate agents in Ontario. I'm very, very excited about that.

I also want to thank the MPP for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for his constructive comments. I hear what he's saying about the need for consumers to be able to cancel water heater agreements. I think it's the 20-day provision, the doubling of that time, that's going to provide more-than-sufficient time for consumers to confer with their families or friends or whoever they need to talk to about these contracts. There's a safety net in there for changing consumers' minds and prohibiting installation of the water heaters.

Also, the member for Trinity–Spadina spoke. Thank you for your comments.

My colleague from Scarborough–Agincourt made some very excellent points as well about why Bill 55 is so important.

This is part of a big package. This is part of a package of consumer protection initiatives that we're introducing. These measures were committed to in the throne speech, so we are moving on that commitment, Speaker. It's about consumers understanding their rights and helping businesses understand their responsibilities. Together, we're trying to create a stronger marketplace, and a stronger marketplace is good for everyone. I don't think anyone is going to disagree with that. I'm confident that these reforms will give consumers stronger protection in Ontario.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1009 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Miss Monique Taylor:** It is my great pleasure to welcome my dear friend Jimmy Moffat to the House today, from the sheet metal workers. Welcome, Jimmy.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'd like to introduce two constituents from the great village of Thorndal: Linda Ross and Rachel Ross. Thanks for coming down today, and have a great day.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** It's my pleasure to introduce Matthew Ahrens, who's the brother of Jason Ahrens, a page—Matthew is a former page, as well—and his grandmother, Ann De Roia. Please help me welcome them to the House today.

**Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield:** I, too, am more than delighted to welcome my constituent Ann De Roia, who is the grandmother of both Jason and, of course, of Nicholas Raponi De Roia, from Ottawa South. We have quite a family gathering here today in the Legislature. We're thrilled that they're all here with us so that they could listen to this wonderful question period we're going to have.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to welcome some constituents to the House today: Lynn Saunders, Margaret Casey, Leanna Foster, Maralynn Beach and Janet MacDougall. Maralynn Beach is a resident of Leaside; it's the 100th anniversary of Leaside this year. Welcome.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am delighted to welcome Melissa Kargiannakis to the gallery today. She is a constituent of mine and a passionate advocate of health and improving health care. Please welcome Melissa.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I am delighted to introduce Ali Riza Güney, consul general of Turkey for Toronto; Hüseyin Nurgel, president of the Federation of Canadian Turkish Associations; Umit Eruysal, president of the Turkish Culture and Folklore Society; Yaman Üzümeri, external vice-president of the Turkish federation; Mehmet Bor, past president of the Turkish federation; Yıldız Ünsal, treasurer of the Turkish Federation Community Foundation; and Feruzberk Khueaykulov, executive director of the Turkish federation.

I also invite all my colleagues to join us this afternoon for the Multicultural Children's Day reception in committee room 230 between 12 and 1 o'clock this afternoon.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Before I begin, Speaker, I want to say on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus: We want to give our thanks to the RCMP, Toronto police, York, Peel, the OPP, CSIS and leaders of Toronto's Islamic community for thwarting the terrorists' plot and to keep Ontarians safe.

I have a question for the Minister of Finance, based on his remarks yesterday to the Economic Club—just a quick, direct question to the Minister of Finance.

Minister, in your speech, you said you were going to hold the line on taxes, and then you talked about increasing new revenue tools. Can you please distinguish for us the difference between a revenue tool and a tax?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** What I said yesterday was the following: We have been able to beat our targets by \$5



billion. Our deficit projection is now \$9.8 billion. We're exceeding targets, for the past four years running, and we're doing so because of the extensive measures of restraint that we've implemented and because of the co-operation we've had with our stakeholders to ensure that our public services are not only protected but that they're also sustainable and affordable. More importantly, we are generating a degree of revenues through some of the incentives that we're providing to increase—more production, more business investment, more job creation, and that is what's helping our economy recover in a very pragmatic and a very stable environment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I don't think I got an answer to my question. I asked the minister, very simply, to distinguish between—on the one hand he says he's not going to increase taxes, and on the other hand he says he's going to bring in what he called new revenue tools, which to me sounds like the same thing. It sounds like a tax increase.

Let me make this point, Minister: For some time now, the Liberals, under Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne, have focused on increasing taxes, revenue tools—whatever you want to call them. You increased business taxes; you cancelled personal income tax reductions; you brought in the health tax that you said was going to save health care; you brought in the HST to say that you would use that to balance the budget, and now we have among the worst deficits in the history of the province and the largest one in Canada; you brought in the eco taxes—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:**—exactly with the number of taxes they brought in.

A quick question, Minister: Why should we trust you with one penny more when you blew all that money and dug us into a deep hole?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Ontario is now the lowest-cost, lowest-tax jurisdiction in North America. We are the most competitive in North America to attract business investments. We have reduced taxes; we have inspired companies to invest.

It shocks me that the members opposite—their solutions to the problems and the difficulties and the sensitivities of our recovery—what are they saying? “Cut even more.” We are the lowest-cost jurisdiction per capita for public service anywhere in Canada. We've done a good—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That will do. Thank you.

Carry on.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** So we'll stay the course. We're going to continue investing in infrastructure, we're going to continue investing in those incentives and those initiatives to attract more business, and we are going to protect public service. We are going to protect health care and education. We are going to protect those things that make

us competitive. We're not going to fall prey to a slash-and-burn policy.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just before I go to final supplementary, the member from Northumberland will come to order.

Carry on.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker.

I listened to the minister very closely, and he said that Ontario is the lowest-cost and lowest-tax jurisdiction—in North America, I believe you said. Minister, you know that doesn't meet with the facts, and I hope that you'll put more thought into preparing this important budget than you do to the speaking notes that you seem to have before you. The budget is absolutely crucial.

Let me make this point again: You've tried the route of increased taxes to fulfill runaway spending—in fact, reckless spending; it's up by 70% under the McGuinty and Wynne Liberals. You also said that you're going to stay the course, but I ask you, if increasing taxes and runaway spending have given us the biggest deficit in Canada—they have put 600,000 people out of work in Ontario today, and our growth rate is actually slowing down—doesn't it tell you it's time to take a bold new course, go off in a new and different direction and get Ontario growing again?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We are in fact one of the most competitive jurisdictions in North America. Around the world, people are competing for those investments, and Ontario is the third-largest jurisdiction in North America to attract foreign direct investments, and we're succeeding. We're succeeding in creating 400,000 net new jobs since the recession. We're succeeding in providing the stimulus and the growth necessary.

It is critical that we remain competitive. That is why our corporate tax rate and our personal tax rate will remain at the low levels that they are now, and we will not at any time find ourselves in a situation where we're going to put the people of Ontario at risk by taking on some of the issues that they've proposed—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. The member from Prince Edward–Hastings, come to order.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

But there is something that the Leader of the Opposition did say that is critical here. He says this budget is crucial. This budget is critical. This budget should be read and it should be looked at, and that is when he should make a decision.

We have a good plan, Mr. Speaker.

1040

## GOVERNMENT SPENDING

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Of course, the role of the finance minister is a critical role that calls for the highest levels of competence and command of the facts.



I say to the finance minister, you've not been able to distinguish between revenue tools and new taxes. You keep changing your view on where we rank on—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:**—focus on those basics, it shakes my confidence in your ability to move us towards balance or to get our economy growing again.

Let me give you a very simple proposition. Under the McGuinty and Wynne Liberals, government spending has gone up by 70%. It's actually a remarkable and reckless increase in spending. We still have a massive deficit. If you actually freeze spending today, if you don't increase spending overall, you can balance the budget within two years.

Minister, why not just take a very simple, direct approach: Freeze spending today, and we can balance the budget in two years and get our economy growing again.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, we have been extraordinary in keeping our spending growth below 1%. We have maintained a co-operation and a collaboration with our stakeholders to achieve zero-zeros throughout our deals. We've enabled ourselves, together with all parties, to ensure that everyone is doing their part.

I agree: The most important and critical thing that we can do is eliminate and tackle the deficit by 2017-18, and that's the path that we're on. We're taking all the steps necessary to invest in our youth and to invest in infrastructure and to invest in our health care and to invest in our education.

These are the things that are going to give us long-term competitiveness. These are things that work, and these are things that we'll continue to do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Let me see if I follow the minister's arguments. He said—and it is a line in your speech from yesterday—“The most important and fundamental thing that we can do, together, to secure our future prosperity is eliminate the deficit.” You just basically used that line word for word. But then, Minister, you announced three new spending initiatives—I think you said in infrastructure, you said in training, you said in something else.

If you say you're going to balance the budget and then you announce three new spending initiatives, how in the world are you actually going to accomplish that unless you truly plan to increase taxes yet again on the backs of hard-working Ontario families and businesses?

Let me give you another approach. Why don't you just stop the scandals like the gas plants, stop the scandals like Ornge and eHealth, and hold somebody accountable? And then, Minister, again, if you hold spending as it is today, built on a 70% spending increase, you can actually balance the budget in two years. If it's your top priority, why don't you take that path and balance by 2015?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It seems that the member opposite isn't prepared to invest in the people of Ontario and in roads and bridges, in infrastructure, in those very issues that provide for business growth and economic renewal.

That is what we're doing; that is what we will do. We have the courage; we have the plan. We have what's necessary to provide the hope and opportunity for the people of Ontario. It's not about more government; it's about more opportunity. It's not—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Chatham, come to order.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It's not about cutting for the sake of cutting. It's about transforming and ensuring that those public services are maintained at a lower cost. That is what we're doing, and we will continue to do so.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Because of decisions that this minister, Premier Wynne and Premier McGuinty and the Liberals have made, we now have over 500,000 of our friends, our neighbours, our family members who are out of work and losing hope. We're doubling our debt. We've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs. The minister's only solution seems to be to spend more, to delay balancing the books, and then increase taxes.

Let me illustrate the threat of debt here. We celebrated the other day—my colleague from Conestoga mentioned Benjamin Leone, Rob's son, born into this world. He was born with a \$20,000 provincial debt on his back. Before the Liberals came to power, that was \$11,000, so you basically almost doubled the debt. What do you say to young people today when you're putting \$20,000 of debt on their backs and then some, when you don't balance until 2017? Why are you putting your inability to make decisions today onto the backs of the next generation? Don't we need to go in the opposite direction and build a stronger—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I've been very clear. We know that the Conservative government federally has not been able to meet their targets. They continue to have increased debt and increased deficits when they had huge surpluses. Other jurisdictions and other provinces have also had difficulty, given the slow growth, meeting their targets.

Ontario has been very pragmatic—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** And I'll have a seat, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think you will.

The member from Chatham will come to order—second time.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you.

Ontario has been very clear that we are going to balance our books by 2017-18. We have been strategic and very pragmatic, doing it in a gradual way and in a way that will continue to inspire growth and greater prosperity.

We want to be fair. We want all Ontarians to benefit. No one should be left behind. We want to ensure that everyone's at their best. This budget will do just that.

I hope the member opposite will read it, I hope the member opposite will give it consideration, because it's the right thing to do.

### HOME CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. New Democrats have been clear since the throne speech that if we're going to support a budget, it has to create jobs, it has to strengthen health care and it has to make life more affordable.

There are families with loved ones waiting as long as 262 days for home care in this province, and that's unacceptable. We've put forward a simple proposal to ensure a five-day guarantee for home care, and if the government finally keeps its promise to cap CEO salaries in the health sector, it won't add a nickel to the deficit.

Will the Premier commit to that today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I appreciate the question from the leader of the third party. I have been quite clear both in our private meetings and in this House that we had identified some areas that we wanted to work on, and many of those areas are areas that the leader of the third party has expressed interest in.

One of those is investment in home care. I've been very clear that we're willing to work with them and make sure that we make the investments that are necessary so that people get home care in a timely way. It's extremely important to families that they know their loved ones are going to get the care they need and they can stay in their homes as long as they want.

I have been very clear that that's an area we want to work on with the third party. I hope we'll be able to do that between now and the budget, but we will be making investments in home care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's a simple step that would improve our health care system and add certainty to people's lives in a very difficult time.

The government talks about targets and goals that they already have in place, but families know that far too often, people fall through the cracks and are left waiting hundreds of days on waiting lists that have stretched these days now into the thousands. Is the Premier ready to commit to a guarantee? Is she ready to commit to a guarantee that people waiting for home care won't be waiting more than five days?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I am committing to is consistent and ongoing improvement in our health care system. I think it's extremely important that political leaders make commitments that are doable, that are

achievable, that we not throw out numbers in a way that's irresponsible and then are not able to meet those goals.

I think it's extremely important that we understand what's doable, that we make investments that will improve health care, that will in fact, as the Minister of Finance said, transform the way we deliver service, because we know that as people age, we are dealing with a whole new demographic and a whole new reality about how service needs to be delivered.

We're going to continue to make investments, but at the same time, we're changing the way those services are delivered to make them better.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People waiting for home care want to see that guarantee and they want to know that that guarantee is funded fairly. Will the Premier finally enact the hard cap on public sector CEO salaries so that we know that the dollars will be invested in front-line care for patients, not executive compensation?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I hear the spirit of what the leader of the third party is talking about, but the numbers don't match. In fact, the money that needs to be invested in home care goes far beyond any savings that would be acquired by capping CEO salaries. I think that is an issue that needs to be addressed.

But the bigger issue is that people need to know—you're right—that they're going to get the home care that they need, that they're going to be able to stay in their homes. They also need to know that if they need care in their home from a physician, for example, that's going to happen, that they will have a house call, that they'll have a home visit that will allow them to get the care that they need. Those are the kinds of transformations that we're going to make, Mr. Speaker, because that is what will make health care better. That's what will transform the system and will make it capable of dealing with the aging population that is coming down the track at us.

1050

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'd just like to remind the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek that I'll offer some help today if he needs it.

New question.

### HOME CARE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is to the Premier, although I'm quite disconcerted that I didn't hear a yes to hard caps on salaries, nor did I hear a guarantee of five days for home care. It's quite disconcerting.

What people want to see in the upcoming budget though, Speaker, is something that's concrete. They want to see real results. They don't want to see a government that they've seen time and time again fail to deliver on the promises that they make. That's the reality, unfortunately.

Elba wrote to us. She lives in Toronto, and she wrote this: "I think that the waiting for home care services is



[so long] on the hope that people will drop dead while waiting....

“[It’s] very terrifying becoming older, weaker and sick in this country. I won’t have someone like myself to fight” for me, “as I did for my husband.”

Women like Elba need to see a real guarantee that they won’t be waiting longer than five days when they need their home care. Will the Premier commit to Elba and others to a five-day guarantee?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I’m just going to make a general comment. I’ve talked about the need to improve home care, and I’m very committed to that, but I want to make a comment about the budget process. It is extremely important to the people of Ontario that the people in this Legislature take this very seriously. This is not a political game. This is not a Ping-Pong game where you’ll put out a policy, and I’ll put out a policy, and we’ll see which one we can fight about and where we land. That’s not what it’s about. It’s about looking at our current situation. It’s about looking at the global economic situation. It’s about staying on track and being fiscally responsible. It’s about making the critical investments that the people of Ontario need so that their province and their services can improve over time and so that we create the conditions for growth. That’s what this budget is about, Mr. Speaker. It’s not that it’s a Liberal budget; it’s not that it’s an NDP budget or that it’s a Conservative budget. It’s the right budget for the people of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I think it’s about the fact that these are tough times for the families of this province. That’s what it’s about. They’re being asked to pay more, and they see cuts being made to their hospitals and to their health care system. That’s what they see.

Irma in Toronto had a loved one receiving home care and writes, “Based on my experience I would say that the government was wasting far too much money on management and not spending wisely on ensuring that their clients were getting good care.”

Will the Premier guarantee that money goes to the needs of patients and take the simple step of capping CEO salaries in the coming budget?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Of course I will guarantee that money is going to go to the service of people in the province and particularly in the area of home care. In fact, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment, the Minister of Finance and I are going to be at a community service organization in north Toronto, in Minister Hoskins’s riding, this afternoon. It’s called SPRINT. It has been delivering services to people in their homes for decades. In fact, some of the ideas for transforming the way we deliver service—i.e., making sure that people get their services at home, making sure that doctors are available to people in their homes—come from the organization that we’re going to be visiting this afternoon.

I am committed to implementing those changes. The Minister of Health is working on those. That’s the transformation of the system that I’m talking about that will make it sustainable over time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** People have told us that they’re looking for change—simple, affordable change—that makes their lives better. They’ve been promised it over and over again but constantly find that they’re being asked to pay more and expect less from their government.

New Democrats have been clear since the throne speech: If we are going to support a budget, it has to create jobs, strengthen health care and make life more affordable for Ontarians. Will we hear a commitment from the Premier today that she will cap executive salaries and ensure that people waiting for home care will have it in five days, guaranteed?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of the third party will hear, in the budget when it is read, a commitment to improving the lives of people in Ontario. She will hear a commitment in those areas that she has identified because those are areas, Mr. Speaker, that we had identified as needing work: youth unemployment, improvement of home care and making sure that people have the services that they need in a timely way.

But we will not be held hostage to an arbitrary list. I have said many times that I am happy to work with the leader of the third party, and we are going to do what’s in the best interests of the people of Ontario, in the areas that she has identified and beyond.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. The amnesia continued this morning at the justice committee. We did get a little insight into the Oakville negotiations from your predecessor’s policy director, Sean Mullin. Read into the record was testimony that the government was committed to “make TransCanada whole.” There are at least 10 references to that. That could cost \$1 billion. That’s a far cry from the \$40-million number the Auditor General told us is unrealistic and yet you cling to. Former cabinet secretary Shelly Jamieson told us last week that there are “buckets of costs” for Oakville.

Premier, tell us today about the buckets of costs for Oakville.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** The member mentions the witness this morning. Again, Mr. Speaker, I can’t help it that the Conservative Party keeps calling witnesses that don’t answer questions the way they wanted to. It reminds me of their first witness. My favourite was their first witness. They called the former Speaker of the House of Commons. I read from the Toronto Star: “Tory Witness Bolsters Liberals’ Case to Clear Chris Bentley of Wrong-doing.”

In terms of the Oakville situation, I think the honourable member is aware of two things. The first is that the Auditor General, an officer of the Legislature, is looking into the Oakville gas plant as directed, as asked, by the Premier, in an effort to provide transparency. The second thing he knows is that his party was front and centre in opposing that gas plant.

We look forward to testimony from candidates in that riding, candidates that we've asked to come forward who have not yet made themselves available. We look for his help in assisting for those witnesses to come to the forefront.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My gosh, Bob Fosse could not have coordinated a better dance routine than that. Premier, all the public wants to know is: How much did the Liberal scandal cost, and who ordered the documents to be withheld? Weeks later, we still don't know the real cost.

It's clear that every Liberal staffer brought before the committee is putting their party's needs ahead of the interests of the taxpayer. Not one Liberal is telling us the whole story, Speaker. What we do know is that the Premier's office, along with cabinet, have directed this scandal from the very beginning. We do know that there was absolutely no regard for the taxpayer. The objective was to do a deal at any cost, Speaker.

I ask you, Premier: Will you end this charade and come clean on the Oakville costs?

**Hon. John Milloy:** These are oldies but goldies. The member from Halton, Hansard, June 1: "The people of Oakville have told you they don't want the proposed gas-fired power plant ... and I agree with them." The member from Halton, press release: "Minister, will you move the Oakville power plant? I'm asking the minister to consider moving this plant." The member from Halton told the Toronto Sun on October 7, 2010: "It was sad that it took so long for the government to listen to the people of Oakville ... it was nice to see that decision overturned."

Mr. Speaker, again, where is the Conservative costing? We asked for Conservative candidates, from both the Oakville and Mississauga areas, to come forward, along with the New Democratic Party candidates. None have made themselves available. I asked the honourable member to use his influence to have them come forward and talk about the work that they did, the analysis to cost out what it would cost to cancel the Oakville plant. We are looking forward to that testimony as we are the Auditor General's report.

1100

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, the more we learn about the private power deals that your government signed, the more we see that these deals were great for private power companies and lousy for the people who pay the bills. This morning, the former Premier's senior energy adviser wouldn't or couldn't

tell Ontarians why private power companies were getting to shape the province's electricity plan.

Can the Premier explain why TransCanada got a heads-up on the province's energy plan before this House was informed?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I actually appreciate the question that was being asked about the whole issue of siting power plants in this province. It is something that the government, in co-operation with the opposition, have expanded the mandate of the committee to look at. I think it's about time that we stop going on these fishing trips and that the committee actually starts to look at how we could move forward, because the simple fact of the matter is that that honourable member represents a party that was equally opposed to the Oakville plant, as was the Progressive Conservative Party. All parties in this Legislature were opposed.

We recognize that there were mistakes made. I think it would benefit all of us if the committee focused on how to move forward and how to come up with the right decision-making process.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Boy, you can't even deny this stuff anymore. Premier, people expect the electricity system to provide affordable energy for this province so families can pay their bills and so businesses can afford to grow. But instead, the government is promising private power companies that they can see the energy plan and make sure it helps them out before the province sees it.

Can the Premier explain why private power companies are coming ahead of hard-working families and the creation of jobs?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, the honourable member fails to acknowledge his party's record on the Oakville situation. It was identical to all the rest of the parties. The member himself said, "I don't agree." He told Inside Halton, "I don't agree with the Oakville power plant, I don't think it's necessary."

The member from Beaches–East York, on December 2, 2010, said, "I'm glad the people of Oakville came to their senses. I'm glad the people of Oakville hired Erin Brockovich and did all the things that they did in order to have this killed."

There is unanimity of all parties in terms of what happened at Oakville and Mississauga. I think we all welcome the honourable member, his colleagues and all colleagues of the Legislature if they want to use this committee as it should be to come forward with recommendations on how we move forward in future decisions. That is the mandate that has been given to the committee. Unfortunately, they spend a lot of time on fishing expeditions when they should be looking at the broader policy questions.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** My question is to the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. On



April 12, a final political hurdle was cleared towards building a second bridge span across the Detroit River. President Obama gave his presidential permit, widely considered the last approval required before we go forward. This is indeed very good news, to have the White House's support. Can the minister now tell us what this bridge is going to mean for Ontario's economy and jobs?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I certainly thank my colleague for this important question. As Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment, I'm very pleased to see that President Obama has endorsed the new Detroit River international crossing.

You may not know this but more than \$110 billion in goods cross the Windsor border each year, making this North America's premier trade crossing. Ontario exports 77% of the goods that we produce here to the United States, and almost a third of that travels across the border into Michigan. More efficient crossings mean better access to US markets for Ontario manufacturers, helping them to grow and to thrive.

North America's auto industry sees millions of vehicle components crossing the border every day to ensure their just-in-time delivery to assembly plants in both Michigan and southern Ontario. While the bridge itself is a federal initiative, the province is doing its part by building the \$1.4-billion Windsor-Essex Parkway to link the new crossing to the 401.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. I'm glad to see that Ontario businesses and families, particularly in Windsor and southwestern Ontario, will benefit from the new Detroit River international crossings and the increased access to the United States market.

The truth is that the United States will continue to be a very important trading ally for Ontario, but we've got to look at new markets because that's where the world is growing. Can the minister tell us what the ministry is doing to help Ontario businesses access new, fast-growing markets outside of North America?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** The member is right in indicating that we need to look at new markets, not simply existing ones. Last year, the efforts of my ministry and our government helped over 1,000 Ontario exporters access or expand their export markets through participating in our programs. For example, over 540 Ontario companies participated in 69 different international trade missions to places in Europe, South America, Asia, the Middle East and North America. Since 2007, just in that period of time, we've led 37 international minister-led missions and eight Premier-led missions to destinations around the world to promote Ontario business. The most recent mission, of course, was to China in January. It resulted in the signing of nearly \$800 million in contracts for Ontario businesses.

Here in Ontario, we provide consultations, seminars and many other supports to businesses looking to expand globally. When Ontario companies are looking to expand

globally, our government will be there to offer whatever assistance we can to help them grow their businesses.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is to the Premier. Last week, your parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy compared the Liberal gas plant scandal to the USA putting a man on the moon. He said the US never knew the cost of putting a man on the moon and that your government never knew the cost of cancelling the gas plants.

In the wake of those ridiculous comments, we've uncovered a few factoids. Did you know that the average cost of launching a space shuttle, according to NASA, is around \$400 million? If we use NASA's math, which is far more trustworthy than the Premier's math, for the same price of three shuttle launches to outer space, you can save three Liberal MPP seats.

Premier, do you share Bob Delaney's view that Charles Sousa's, Laurel Broten's and Kevin Flynn's seats are—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I'm going to wait for quiet and definitely remind members that this is becoming too frequent. I'm going to remind members that they are to use their titles or their ridings. It's the spiral down, so I'm going to stop it. From here on in, if I hear that, I'll pass the question.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Energy will want to speak to the specifics in the supplementary, but I just want to say that the decisions that we made to relocate and cancel the gas plant projects in Oakville and Mississauga were decisions that were supported by every member of this House, by all parties. We listened to the communities. We made the decisions to relocate those gas plants, and there were costs associated with that. The reality is that when projects have begun, there is a cost associated to making a change.

Mr. Speaker, I really believe that it's very important that I have been the Premier who has asked the Auditor General to look at those costs, to make sure that the calculations that are made are open and transparent. That's why we asked the Auditor General to look at it. I look forward to his report. In the meantime, I think it's great that the committee is able to broaden its mandate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Back to the Premier: Premier, you have repeatedly stood in this House and promised on the record that you will appear before the justice committee to answer for your role in this massive scandal—it's galactic, the level of the scandal. Next Tuesday you've been invited to appear before the justice committee. Will you confirm to the House today that you will order and instruct your staff to not play calendar or scheduling games? Will you keep your promise and confirm your appearance at the justice committee investigating the gas plant scandal on Tuesday, April 30, 2013? Yes or no? Are you coming to the committee?

1110

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I can say quite unequivocally that the Premier will be in attendance at the committee.

I want to address the main issue that he asked in the main question. He referred to the cost of relocating the Oakville plant. I want to read from a letter that I delivered to the Clerk of the Committee yesterday afternoon:

“At the meeting of the justice committee on Tuesday, April 23, 2013, Liberal members intend to bring forward a motion requiring the Ontario Power Authority to appear at a meeting of the committee.

“Our commitment is to be open and transparent. To support the work of the committee, the OPA will be in a position to share their current estimate of longer-term costs and savings associated with the relocation of the Oakville plant.

“As you know, the government also has asked the Auditor General to report on the Oakville relocation. The auditor’s work with the OPA is currently under way, and we look forward to receiving the auditor’s final report.”

Mr. Speaker, we are being open—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Be seated, please.

### CANCER TREATMENT

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Merci monsieur le Président. Ma question est pour la première ministre.

Yesterday we heard from one of the hospitals affected by the diluted chemotherapy drugs. Windsor Regional Hospital, like all of the affected hospitals, used an approved procurement process to source these drugs. Yet at committee, a hospital official said they were “under the impression that some safeguards had been put in place.” Speaker, there is ample evidence that the minister knew about this grey area of oversight for years. Can the Premier explain why the ministry failed to do their primary job of oversight?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you for the question, although I must say I’m a bit surprised to hear that question. I think it is abundantly clear that when I became aware of the issue of underdosing of chemotherapy drugs, we acted within days.

We have heard that Health Canada has been aware of this issue for many years. I think that as we work together to take the steps necessary to assure patients that they do have access to the right drugs, we will be working with Health Canada. I am delighted that last week they announced that they are actually acknowledging that there is an area that needs attention. Regulations that we’ve announced will take us in the direction we need go.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Back to the Premier. Ontarians want to know what happened, but they want also to be assured that this kind of lapse in oversight will never happen again.

I’m really concerned that the ministry seems to be unwilling to acknowledge that they failed to provide oversight. They’re unwilling to acknowledge that they even had a role to play. Will the Premier admit that a mistake was made by her minister and explain what is being done now to address other unrelated areas in our health care system?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I, once again, am happy to say that when we became aware of this issue we took immediate action. We pulled together all of the partners. There is no question that the health care system is focused on addressing this issue. You heard from the CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital; you heard from the chief of staff at Windsor Regional Hospital. Yesterday they appeared. They are focused on ensuring that this does not happen again. We also have Dr. Jake Thiessen, who is working on the whole cancer drug supply.

I would hope that the member opposite would be listening to what her critic in Ottawa is saying, the questions that are being asked in Ottawa of Health Canada. We have shared responsibility here and we are acting together to resolve the issue.

### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, it can be tough at times to balance and to care full-time for your children, your aging parents, or both. Recently, I happened to read an article in the Globe and Mail that focused on this very issue. It profiled a young family, the career and personal sacrifices that they needed to make to ensure that their loved ones were properly cared for.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister: Can the minister tell us, what can the government do? How can the government make the life of Ontarians who are caring for their loved ones a little easier?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member for a very important question. This is a very important issue and something that I think all of us hear about from our constituents on a frequent basis. We have heard from sole caregivers; we have heard from those who are in the sandwich generation, who are looking after their elderly parents and their young ones at home, as to what we need to do in order to help our elderly parents or other family members who may need help.

That’s why we have put forward a piece of legislation that, if passed, would build on the existing family medical leave to provide up to eight weeks of unpaid job leave for employees to provide care and support to a family member with a serious medical condition.

In addition, that legislation, if passed, would complement recent federal initiatives that provide leaves and benefits for parents who need to care for a critically ill child, or in cases where a child is missing or dies as the



probable result of a crime. This is an important issue, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Thank you to the minister for that answer. The introduction of the Leaves to Help Families Act is good news for Ontarians.

This version of the bill builds upon the previous version by adding in extra leaves that complement the new grants and the unpaid leaves offered by the federal government.

I think that every member of this House and everyone who is watching us today shares a common experience. We're all sons or daughters; we have parents and grandparents; we may have spouses and children. In short, we're all part of a family. When those family members have a major health problem, we want to be there for them.

So through you, Speaker, to the minister: Can the minister update us on the status of this bill?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** This is important, Speaker. This bill is important because it will give working Ontarians the one thing they need most, and that is time to be with their loved ones. I really hope that all MPPs will support this bill. This bill is first and foremost about compassion and making sure we know that our families are doing well.

The debate has commenced on this important bill, and what I have heard so far from the opposition members is heartening to me. I quote the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, who said that the government has come back "with a better bill, and of course they do deserve recognition for it." I thank him for those positive comments.

It's similar for the honourable member from Essex. He said, "I think it's well intentioned. I think it's something that is almost what we would call a no-brainer...."

I hope we will continue with the sentiment, get the debate done in this House and send this bill to committee so that we can move on providing these important care leaves for families.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Premier, while your government has been lost in space, 600,000 men and women are looking for work in Kathleen Wynne's Ontario.

On the Mississauga power plant, you blew your own number by 45%, and now Ontario businesses and families are stuck paying your bill.

Premier, do you think it's right to force Ontario businesses, families, and the 600,000 men and women you have put out of work to pay for your political dirty work?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, you can start with paper—I've got a press release here, or a comment in the Mississauga news, and it quotes—listen to this: "Only Conservative leader Tim Hudak will cancel the Eastern Power gas plant slated to be built on Loreland Ave."

Then you can go to the Twitterverse: "An Ontario PC govt will stop the plant for good." Then you can go to YouTube and watch the Leader of the Opposition, surrounded by his adoring candidates, in front of a crowd of five or six people, saying if he's elected, this plant will be "done, done, done."

The Progressive Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party, the Liberal Party—all of us had the same position in the last election. Again, we're looking forward to hearing their—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

1120

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Attorney General doesn't get the last word; I do.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** That was a heck of a lot better than Michael Jackson's moonwalk, actually.

The Auditor General told us one thing and the Liberal Party is telling us something totally different. What is clear is that political decisions were made, decisions that served to benefit only the Liberal Party of Ontario and are ultimately going to cost Ontario businesses and Ontario families upwards of \$1 billion.

Yesterday your government announced that you will table your budget on May 2, and we can only assume that the NDP, your farm team, will be dutifully supporting it. Premier, what is the final number you're going to write beside the words "Oakville power plant cancellation cost"?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, Mr. Speaker, we have heard from the Auditor General in terms of the Mississauga plant, and the Premier asked the Auditor General to look into the Oakville plant.

We are still waiting to hear about the Progressive Conservative numbers. In fact, just in reference to an earlier question, we have asked that the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hudak, come before the committee next Tuesday, where he can discuss his figures. I hope that the honourable member will ensure that he doesn't play calendar and say that he's too busy to come before the committee, because we're looking forward to his testimony to explain his opposition to the gas plant and how it would be "done, done, done."

## ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** My question is to the Premier. Last week, Neskantaga First Nation declared a state of emergency, looking for provincial assistance with a suicide crisis that has rocked the community. The community attributed these suicides to the social conditions in the community, including prescription drug abuse,

poor water quality, inadequate policing and lack of access to mental health and addiction workers—issues that the province has been aware of for years.

My question is simple: Does the Premier believe that First Nations need to declare states of emergency to access the basic health services that they need?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Of course I do not believe that First Nations communities need to declare states of emergency in order to get services. I had the opportunity to speak with Chief Moonias at the time that the emergency was declared to make sure that Emergency Management Ontario was aware, to make sure that everything we could do we would do to deal with the particular circumstances.

I know that the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs has also had a chance to speak with the chief. We will need to work with our partners, as is always the case in these situations, because the federal government, the provincial government and First Nations communities always have to work in partnership because these are shared responsibilities.

We are very much a part of that, and we are doing everything we can.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Neskantaga is not the first community to declare a state of emergency; it is only the latest. In 2009, it took the pressure of the NDP to get the Ontario government to commit funding for a Payukotayno First Nation suicide prevention program. Yet last year, the same government cancelled \$1.7 million of that funding, leaving the community without supports.

Each and every community across the Far North is dealing with similar challenges, and as the former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Premier knows this well. Will the Premier commit today to address the social conditions existing on all First Nation communities, or does every community need to declare a state of emergency to get basic help from your government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am so committed to improving the lot of the people who live in First Nations communities.

These are complex issues that are rooted in a history of which all of us have to share some shame and blame. We have not, as a society—it doesn't matter what party, it doesn't matter what level of government—always worked in the best interests of the people whom we share this province with. Whether it's First Nations education or whether it's First Nations health care or whether it's the infrastructure on reserves, I am committed to working with my colleagues, to working with the federal government, to working with the First Nations communities to make sure that we address these complex issues.

We have done more to build those relationships and make sure that services flow to First Nations in the last 15 years, and we will continue to do that work.

#### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation.

This government recognizes the importance of collaboration and partnership. It is often through collaboration and partnership that great ideas and technologies are born. Ontario's life sciences sector acts as a case in point, where researchers, public institutions and the private sector work together in finding solutions. Our life sciences community acts as a key driver of our province's economy, creating high-level jobs and producing important breakthroughs.

The statistics on Ontario's life sciences sector are impressive. There are approximately 38,000 high-value jobs, 1,000 companies, \$9.1 billion in revenue, and the export value is \$5.7 billion.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation: What is this government doing to ensure that our life sciences sector is supported?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I thank the member from Scarborough—Agincourt for that question.

Mr. Speaker, by bringing together our world-class scientists, our leading research institutions and a strong private sector, we can make important discoveries that generate economic growth and also create jobs.

Recently, we invested \$36 million in 17 research projects in seven research institutions and universities in the greater Toronto area. We also announced a \$100-million investment in the Ontario Brain Institute. We have committed \$357 million to the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research. We're also encouraging and helping small and medium-sized businesses to conduct research and make innovations in biotechnology, biomedical and also pharmaceuticals.

As the Minister of Research and Innovation, I am proud of the record of this government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm glad to hear that our government is taking steps to support new ideas and technologies that will drive Ontario's future economy and create jobs. In this global economy, it is critical to promote collaboration and build on the strength of our life sciences community.

Yesterday, the Minister of Research and Innovation participated in the BIO 2013 International Convention in Chicago.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Research and Innovation: Can he please tell the House what this government is doing to promote and attract global investments in Ontario?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the member for that question.

On Sunday and Monday, I had the opportunity to participate in the BIO 2013 International Convention in Chicago. The BIO 2013 convention is one of the largest and most important global events in the biotechnology industry. The event featured conferences and exhibitions well attended by policy-makers, scientists and business leaders from around the world.

Organized by the Biotechnology Industry Organization, the event gave Ontario's delegation of more than 300 people—scientists, engineers and business leaders—the opportunity to attend this conference and have the op-



portunity to learn about major trends affecting the industry and to also network with scientists and business leaders from around the world. Most importantly, the convention gave Ontario the opportunity to showcase its strengths on the world stage. This event also helped promote global investments in Ontario that will generate economic growth and create jobs in this province.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** My question is to the Premier.

Premier, let us recall what the leader of the NDP stated in the Legislature on April 16:

“What’s really shocking for people is, the Premier doesn’t seem to be showing any remorse or regret. Instead, it’s just full steam ahead with politics as usual. Yesterday, Ontarians learned that the people of this province are going to be paying \$275 million to cancel that Mississauga plant....

“Why can’t the Premier admit that this was cynical politics at its worst and actually show some remorse for this waste of public money?”

Premier, it’s statements like this that indicate to the people of Ontario that the NDP will support calling the PC motion for debate when it is tabled. Will you commit to getting results for the people of Ontario and to calling our motion for debate when it is tabled? Or will you hide from this confidence motion and push it aside, like all your other Liberal scandals?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, there are two parts of that question that I want to address, and the first is on the regret. I think we could go through Hansard and you could count the number of times I have said “regret”—in fact, maybe we’ll have somebody do that. I have said consistently that I regret that we are in this situation. I regret that we were not able to make the decision earlier, because there is always a cost associated with backtracking when a project has begun. So I’ve been very clear that I regret that. I’ve said it was a political decision; it was a political decision that all parties agreed with.

1130

In terms of confidence in this government, there is a huge opportunity looming—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** There’s a huge opportunity looming for the members in this House to express confidence, or not, in the government, and that is called the budget. On May 2, there is an opportunity for people in this Legislature to express their confidence.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Premier, you talk the talk, but you don’t walk the walk. We still haven’t got answers.

The NDP may think it’s okay to prop up your Liberal government in the midst of a scandal or when it means the destruction of thousands of good jobs in the horse racing industry, but even they must recognize that this gas plant scandal is the straw that broke the horse’s back.

Premier, you’ve dismissed this motion of confidence as a PR stunt. Your assistant to the Minister of Energy has even compared the massive waste of money to a moon mission, all proof that your government just doesn’t take this issue seriously.

Well, the people of my constituency take this issue very seriously. If you think you have the confidence of this House and the people of Ontario, call the motion of confidence when we table it and prove you retain the confidence of this House.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

There is no one in this House that’s looking forward more to the expression of confidence in the government on the budget than I am. We share that anticipation, and I look forward to it.

I do hope that members of the official opposition will read the budget, that they will actually look at what’s in it. It disturbs me that the critic has said that no matter what is in the budget, they’re going to vote against it. It doesn’t seem to me that that is a very responsible position.

The other thing I want to say is that we take the issue around the gas plants extremely seriously. That is why when I came into this position, I called for an open process, I asked for an expansion of the mandate of the committee so that a full range of questions could be asked, I said I would appear before the committee—I’m going to, on Tuesday—and I said that I was going to ask the Auditor General to look at the Oakville situation. I’ve done all those things.

### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Last year, the government eliminated the Program Enhancement Grant that supports arts in schools. Now we are seeing the impact on children. According to People for Education, only 44% of Ontario elementary schools now have a full-time or part-time specialist music teacher. That’s a drop of 5% from last year and the lowest since 2005.

Why is the government reducing student access to music in Ontario schools?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I’m very pleased to be able to talk about music education in our schools, because in fact I believe that music education in our schools is extremely important, just as are education in the performance arts and education in the visual arts. In fact, all those things are part of the curriculum.

We fund the curriculum through the Foundation Grant. The per-pupil Foundation Grant provides the core funding. But we have also provided additional money for 4,900 elementary specialist teachers so that there is an opportunity for school boards to make a choice. Some have chosen to spend that money on music teachers,

some on arts teachers, some on phys. ed. teachers and some on tech teachers. There are specialist teachers—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Minister, yesterday, Graham Henderson, president of Music Canada, spoke of “the declining commitment toward music education in Ontario.” Indeed, access to music teachers has fallen drastically since 1998. Only one in four schools in northern Ontario has a specialist music teacher, and low-income students are least likely to have the opportunity to sing in a choir or play in a band.

When will the minister take action to ensure that all students in Ontario have access to music in their education?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Well, as I just said, all students do have access to music because it's part of the curriculum. You should not assume that an elementary teacher who is not a specialist teacher does not actually have the ability to teach music because many do have qualifications in music as well.

But I think we need to go back and look at the current People for Education report a little bit more closely, because if you look at their own report, they said that the number of schools with a music teacher exclusive to that school was 49%, plus 30% had itinerant music teachers in 2010-11, in other words, 79% of schools. If you look at the next year, yes, there was a trend to itinerant music teachers because declining enrolment was happening. But you'll actually find—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —when you add up the numbers, that 82% of—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I would remind the Minister of Education: I stand, you sit.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Premier on a point of order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I beg your indulgence, Mr. Speaker. There were four more constituents of mine that I apparently had missed: Anne-Marie Branch, Martha McNeil, Barbara Abrams and Joan Tadman. I apologize. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay, on a point of order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, somebody all the way from Holtyre who now lives around somewhere down south: Mr. James Moffat is here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before we recess, I've been hearing a couple of things that I want to bring to the attention of the House—and I ask all of the members to help me with this—and that is, when we mention somebody's absence, it is a very long-standing tradition that we remove ourselves from making comment on anyone's absence, as most people may not know the reason why. I would suspect that we would all be very gentle on that particular issue.

The second one is, when people are answering questions or putting questions, I'm beginning to hear an inordinate amount of heckling from with the same side. So I would ask you to stop trying to provoke by making comments while someone is questioning or making comments while someone is answering—to lower, instead of raise, the provocation. Please help me with that, and I think we will be able to move forward quite well.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1137 to 1500.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### FLOODING

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Over the past few days, my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock has been one of the areas in Ontario that has been hit hard by flooding. This has resulted in a state of emergency being declared in parts of the city of Kawartha Lakes and Minden Hills. In particular, the Burnt River, Black River and Gull River areas in the community of Minden have been most affected.

Over the weekend I toured many of the areas which have experienced the worst flooding, and it was heart-breaking to see the number of residents who have lost their homes and contents. I also saw many local businesses that have been dealt a crippling blow.

Local EMS and emergency personnel are to be commended for their quick action in dealing with the emergency, setting up crisis centres, providing materials for sand-bagging and keeping the public informed through regular website and Facebook updates and radio. Similarly, the personnel of the Trent-Severn Waterway have done a great job in monitoring the water levels and working closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources.

When I toured the hardest-hit areas over the weekend, I was both proud and heartened to see the outpouring of kindness and support from countless volunteers who gave up their weekends to help with the filling and placement of sandbags, or the use of their own watercraft to retrieve stranded residents.

Although some water levels are receding, other rivers have not yet peaked. Many of my constituents are suffering and will need help to get through this. I invite the ministers responsible to tour the affected areas of my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, and I am confident that the federal and provincial governments would not turn their backs on them in their time of need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members' statements? The member from Stoney—from Hamilton East-Stoney-Creek.

### BATTLE OF STONEY CREEK

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Thank you, Speaker. The 200th commemoration of the Battle of Stoney Creek will take



place in just over five weeks. The Battle of Stoney Creek, June 5, 1813, was the turning point of the War of 1812—the victory that ensured our nationhood.

In James Elliott's book *Strange Fatality*, he notes that a handful of native warriors led by John Norton, Mohawk war chief, played a significant role in fighting the American invaders during a night raid. Whooping and yelling ensued by native warriors and British troops, which convinced the Americans there were large numbers of native warriors, and they retreated.

At Battlefield Park, starting on Friday, May 31, activities will begin at 1 p.m. with the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Battlefield Monument. That evening, there will be a parade, a memorial service and a Battlefield Cemetery rededication. Saturday and Sunday, June 1 and 2, will be filled with re-enactments, including a Saturday evening battle and a Sunday afternoon battle. Fireworks will punctuate the activities on both Friday and Saturday evenings.

It will be my distinct honour to participate in the re-enactment as a British captain in the 8th Regiment. I have been a re-enactor in the past, but nothing will compare with this privilege of participating in the bicentennial.

I encourage everyone to come to Stoney Creek's Battlefield Park to participate in the festivities and feel a part of these beginnings of our great nation. Speaker, we're expecting close to 1,000 re-enactors.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I expect the member was okay with me saying "Stoney Creek" first, because that's what it was about.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Good move, Speaker. Good move.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I appreciate that.

#### TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** This past Sunday morning, people in Toronto and all around the country woke up to an unfamiliar sight when they opened the newspaper: There was an X visible beside Toronto in the NHL standings, confirming that the Leafs had made the playoffs for the first time in nine long years. They clinched Saturday night against Ontario's other team at their home away from home in Ottawa by beating the Senators thanks to another outstanding performance by goaltender James Reimer.

This Maple Leaf team was a team that was supposed to finish near the bottom once again, but the Leafs defied expectations in the shortened season, so much so that one is left to consider a legislative motion that calls on Gary Bettman to limit all future NHL seasons to 48 games.

Nine years has been a long time. Many of the current Leafs were still in high school nine years ago. Emerging star Nazem Kadri was 13. It was so long that the phrase "I want to live long enough to see them win the Stanley Cup" became "I want to live long enough to see them make the playoffs."

I'm sure all members of the Legislative Assembly will rise with me today, along with Steve Muir from my

constituency office, to congratulate the Toronto Maple Leafs on clinching their playoff berth, and wish them well and success in the upcoming playoffs. Go, Leafs, go!

#### FLOODING

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise today to note the challenges faced by communities across Parry Sound–Muskoka with recent flooding. I would like to recognize that and thank the individuals involved in keeping our communities safe. I would especially like to recognize mayors Claude Doughty of Huntsville and Graydon Smith of Bracebridge for their tremendous efforts in dealing with the record water levels.

We've been lucky. There has been a lot of damage to property, but thankfully, no loss of life. The flooding has caused many culvert and road washouts throughout the area, and damages to homes and businesses. In Huntsville and Bracebridge, entire subdivisions are underwater. The village of Vankoughnet, where I make my home, has been hard hit with the flooding of the Black River. Accesses to areas around Vankoughnet are still cut off.

Throughout the flood, as both Huntsville and Bracebridge implemented state-of-emergency measures, there were ample updates that provided up-to-the-minute information to keep our residents safe. I would like to recognize our emergency responders, municipal employees and MNR staff, who were able to move quickly to ensure that the flood conditions were managed as best as possible. Also, I would like to thank all of the volunteers who have pitched in to help their neighbours.

I am pleased that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing toured the area today to see the damage first-hand. Although some water levels are receding, other areas will peak in the next few days, so we need to remain vigilant. Many Parry Sound–Muskoka residents, businesses and municipalities are suffering and need help to recover from the recent record floods. I will do my part to ensure the provincial government provides the necessary support.

#### SUSTAINABLE WATERLOO REGION

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** This past week, I had the distinct pleasure of attending the Sustainable Waterloo Evening of Recognition. Sustainable Waterloo Region is a not-for-profit organization that has made incredible progress in advancing the environmental sustainability of organizations across the region.

They have grown tremendously in their collective impact in recent years. In 2012, the Regional Carbon Initiative, Sustainable Waterloo Region's flagship program, increased its membership by 20 organizations, employing 13% of the region's workforce. Members have now committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45,000 tonnes, which is equivalent to taking 10,000 cars off the road.

Last Thursday, Sustainable Waterloo Region recognized five members that made significant achievements in the past year. Awards were presented to XCG Environmental Engineers and Scientists; AET Environmental Consultants, Ecologists and Scientists; VeriForm metal fabricating solutions; Enermodal Engineering; and the region of Waterloo.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to the recipients, and I would also like to congratulate Sustainable Waterloo Region for their outstanding achievements in working towards a thriving Waterloo region with a healthy environment and a vibrant economy. To quote Wilfrid Laurier president Max Blouw, "If you have people within your organization that are passionate about environmental issues, mobilize them." It is amazing what can be achieved when we mobilize on sustainable development, and I would like to personally commend Sustainable Waterloo Region executive director Mike Morrice and board chair Dr. Barry Colbert for their leadership in this area.

#### FIREARMS CONTROL

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I come to the Legislature today to speak about a very sad situation, and that is that in my community there are young people being shot at on a regular basis, young people trying to go to school and trying to come home from school. Their parents are, in fact, afraid of sending them to school by themselves because they're being shot at by gunmen. This is happening over and over again.

About three weeks ago, a young 15-year-old coming back from an after-school program was shot at. Luckily, he survived; others have not survived the shootings. We have great schools in Lawrence Heights—Lawrence Heights Middle School, Flemington, John Polanyi high school—yet the children and families don't feel safe, because there are too many gunmen and too many guns on our streets.

1510

It's about time we all came together in this Legislature to say that we do not condone these criminals that shoot at innocent children and drive around our cities with guns in their cars. We need to take some strong action. I think we need to join together with our police, our social workers, our schools and our parents and stop this gun madness that these few criminals use to destroy our communities and attack our children. We've got to stop this gun madness by these criminals.

#### ROSANNAGH MacLENNAN

**Mr. Frank Klees:** It gives me great pride to recognize Rosannagh "Rosie" MacLennan being named the Ontario Female Athlete of the Year. As Canadians, who can forget Rosie in London? We looked on with pride as she won Canada's sole gold medal at the 2012 summer Olympics in London. She won that gold in women's trampoline.

Rosie was born and raised in King City. She started trampoline at the age of seven and began competing internationally at age 11. Since then, she was the Canadian National Women's Champion in 2005, 2009 and again in 2011. This was Rosie's second Olympics, first competing in 2008 in Beijing. She also won the gold in the 2011 Pan Am Games and came in second at the 2011 World Trampoline Championships.

It was in London that Rosie was able to carry on her grandfather's dreams of Olympic gold. Her grandfather, Lorne Patterson, was to compete in the 1940 Olympics as a gymnast, but those Olympics were cancelled because of the Second World War, and thus he was never able to compete for Canada. Sadly, he passed away before his granddaughter brought home the gold.

It's an honour for me to recognize Rosie MacLennan for being named the 2012 Ontario Female Athlete of the Year. I ask all members of this Legislature to join me in extending our heartfelt congratulations.

#### PETER ORPHANOS

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Today I rise to remember and pay tribute to a friend and western Mississauga resident. Peter Orphanos passed away of brain cancer last December. Peter Orphanos was one of the founders of the Sierra Club of Peel and was, to the end, a tireless campaigner for the environment.

Prior to his retirement from a 35-year teaching career with the Peel District School Board, Peter shared his passion for nature, and in particular the diversity of the Credit River watershed, with generations of students.

Peter advocated for the protection and preservation of his beloved Credit River. His most recent project was to have the river officially incorporated into Ontario's greenbelt. Peter received Credit Valley Conservation's 2012 Award of Excellence and was honoured by EcoSource. In 2012, Peter was recognized with the prestigious Conservation Pioneer Award.

This past Sunday, Peter's Streetsville community organized a memorial service to celebrate his accomplishments and to share our memories. The Peter Orphanos "Credit Forever" campaign, to fulfill his long-held dream of planting half a million trees in the Credit River Valley, was launched, with 400 saplings planted and a commemorative plaque to Peter unveiled on the grounds of Streetsville Memorial Park.

You have left a lasting glow on western Mississauga, Peter Orphanos. Your community salutes you.

#### LONDON LIGHTNING

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'd like to take the time to acknowledge, for the second year in a row, the London Lightning basketball club as the reigning National Basketball League champion. The Lightning defeated the Summer-side Storm, from Prince Edward Island, 87-80 in the fourth game of a five-game series to clinch the title.

This year marks the National Basketball League's second season as well as London Lightning's second



championship victory. Led by coach Michael Ray Richardson, a former NBA all-star, the Lightning excited crowds all year and finished with the best record in the league.

Since the league's inception, the London Lightning have offered basketball fans in London an entertaining display of athletics and excitement. They've also cultivated a positive reputation off the court by engaging the community and reaching out to youth basketball programs to inspire and teach young kids valuable skills and life lessons.

As a lifelong basketball fan myself, I am proud of my riding's team's success and continued efforts to grow and expand the NBL brand. Congratulations to the London Lightning franchise, and I look forward to celebrating a three-peat next year.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on a point of order.

#### WEARING OF PINS

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you, Speaker. I will be making a ministerial statement this afternoon and would seek unanimous consent to allow my opposition critics and myself to wear the Canadian Cancer Society daffodil during my statement and the opposition responses.

Tomorrow morning, we will be seeking unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear daffodil pins in recognition of the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil Month. Daffodil pins will be distributed to all members of the Legislature in the morning, following granting of unanimous consent.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has asked for unanimous consent for the opposition critics and herself to wear the pin today and will be seeking unanimous consent tomorrow. Is it the pleasure of the House to agree? Agreed.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### CANCER CARE

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** April 27 is the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil Day, a day when we have a chance to show we stand shoulder to shoulder with those fighting cancer. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Canadian Cancer Society. That's an important milestone in the history of an organization that does such vital work.

Since 1938, the Canadian Cancer Society has been funding research and cancer prevention programs, supporting people living with cancer, along with their fam-

ilies and caregivers, and advocating for public policies to improve the health of Canadians. My heartfelt thanks go to the dedicated staff and volunteers of the Canadian Cancer Society for their unwavering commitment to the battle against cancer.

I think it's important to acknowledge just how far we've come when it comes to cancer care in Ontario: 75 years ago, if you were diagnosed with cancer, your chances of survival were about 25%; today, over 60% of Canadians with cancer will survive at least five years after their diagnosis, and Ontario has one of the finest cancer care systems in the world. We're continuing to make that system even stronger by investing in screening programs, in prevention efforts and in specialized health human resources.

Last October, for example, I was very pleased to announce that we're integrating breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening services into a single coordinated provincial program, which will allow us to reach more Ontarians. Evidence shows that for these three cancers specifically, regular screening can detect changes or abnormalities that could become cancerous. Regular screening can also find cancer at an early stage, when outcomes are much more favourable. Ontarians can sign up through their physicians to receive mailed notifications when they're due for their next breast, cervical or colorectal screening.

We've also created the Time to Screen tool as a stepping stone towards an eventual personalized cancer risk assessment profile. The Time to Screen tool gives people more information on when they should start screening, based on their age and gender. This is available at [Ontario.ca/screenforlife](http://Ontario.ca/screenforlife).

As a result of our investments, I'm pleased to share that we're meeting our provincial targets for breast and cervical screening for women.

We know that when patients are first diagnosed with cancer, it can be an overwhelming experience. That's why, in partnership with Cancer Care Ontario, we introduced 14 patient navigators in hospitals across Ontario last May. These are nurses with specialized education in cancer care. They support patients being tested for cancer, conduct assessments, make referrals, provide patient education, develop plans of care and do follow-ups.

Cancer Care Ontario also created aboriginal patient navigators and regional aboriginal cancer leads in four key regions of the province where significant aboriginal populations live to give aboriginal communities better, faster access to care.

##### 1520

I'm very proud of our continued efforts towards our goal of having the lowest smoking rates in the country. Cigarettes are the number one cause of preventable cancer, and tobacco-related disease costs Ontario's health system about \$2.2 billion every year. We've already accomplished a great deal with Smoke-Free Ontario, and we renewed the strategy in 2011, with an added investment of \$5 million. As part of our plan to help smokers who want to quit, 43 community health centres across the

province now provide over-the-counter nicotine cessation aids and counselling at no cost to smokers.

In collaboration with community, workplace and health care partners, Ontario's launching two more innovative smoking cessation initiatives. First, we're partnering with select workplaces and 11 public health units to reduce smoking among workers in the industrial sector and in the service sector, sectors that have high rates of smoking. Second, we're helping patients in hospitals quit smoking through various strategies, such as providing both brief and intensive counselling and improving care for patients with asthma and other chronic conditions. These new initiatives build on the success of the other supports we offer smokers in Ontario, including free nicotine replacement therapy at 122 family health teams across the province and providing better access to smoking cessation aids, which can now be prescribed by pharmacists.

To help prevent young people from starting to smoke, we've taken action to protect youth from exposure to cigarette displays in stores, and our public health units across Ontario continue to work with schools and their communities to engage youth in tobacco-control activities.

Another way that we're safeguarding the health of our young people is through legislation that would restrict access to tanning beds by youth under 18 years of age. We know that early exposure to artificial UV radiation can cause malignant melanoma, a deadly form of cancer, later in life, yet even in the face of all the warnings about the risks, tanning bed use among young people has been increasing. As you know, the proposed legislation is in second reading. I want to take this opportunity to thank all members from all parties for their support of this legislation. I would like to acknowledge the member from Nickel Belt and the former member from London-Fanshawe for their efforts to restrict access to youth tanning.

Speaker, my deep appreciation goes to Cancer Care Ontario for its partnership and hard work when it comes to managing the province's cancer system. I also want to thank all of our dedicated doctors, nurses, technologists and all the other providers who treat patients and help the people of Ontario stay healthy.

Let's wear our daffodils with pride and show people with cancer that they are not alone in their battle.

#### NATIONAL VICTIMS OF CRIME AWARENESS WEEK

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I rise in the House today to mark National Victims of Crime Awareness Week, which is being commemorated across our province and across Canada. The theme for the week is "We All Have a Role." All levels of government, all participants in the justice system and all of us in Ontario have a vital role to play in supporting victims of crime.

No one ever expects that they, a family member or a loved one will be a victim, but when it happens, it can be

devastating and often have lifelong effects. That's why our government is committed to providing victims with the help and support they need to recover.

We have a broad range of services in place to assist those who have been affected by the trauma of crime—services that meet their unique needs—beginning in the aftermath of crime and continuing through to recovery. I'm pleased to say that we've made a number of improvements to these services in the past year. For example, Family Court support workers are now available across Ontario in every Ontario Court of Justice. These workers help victims of family violence, many of them women and children, stay safe when they enter the Family Court system, typically one of the most dangerous times in an abusive relationship. They refer victims to community services and supports, provide information about the court process and help with safety planning, including getting to and from court safely.

A new program, set to begin in the coming months, will deliver specialized services to aboriginal victims of crime on the James Bay and Hudson Bay coast area. The Mushkegowuk Council will deliver the new services in eight remote communities where no such supports for victims currently exist. Victims of sexual and physical assault, elder and child abuse, and the families of homicide victims will all benefit from these services.

We're also helping victims in the north and in rural areas through the Vulnerable Victims and Family Fund. This special fund covers travels costs where distance would otherwise make it impossible for victims and their families to fully participate in the criminal court process. It also provides for special accommodations for victims with disabilities and helps pay for language interpretation services for family members.

Province-wide services are now in place for male survivors of sexual abuse, helping both recent and historic victims to recover. These include counselling, peer support and specialized 24-hour crisis and referral services.

Of course, all victims of violent crime across Ontario have access to the Victim Support Line, which provides information and referrals to agencies that help victims in their communities. This multilingual telephone line is available across Ontario in most languages spoken in the province.

Speaker, we are proud of the programs and services we have across the province, but we know that none of them would work without the dedicated people and organizations that deliver them on a day-to-day basis, in and out of the court system. National Victims of Crime Awareness Week gives us an opportunity to recognize and celebrate them.

So on Thursday of this week, I will have the honour of presenting this year's Attorney General's Victim Services Awards of Distinction right here in the Legislature. These awards pay tribute to the high quality of services and supports that individuals and groups, volunteers and agencies provide to victims of crime each and every day. The awards also honour the efforts of those who have been personally impacted by crime and who have raised the profile of victims' issues in Ontario.



I will be introducing the award recipients in this House before question period on Thursday, to give us all an opportunity to applaud their tremendous achievements. They only represent the thousands of people who are involved in this work on a day-to-day basis. Their stories are inspiring, and they remind us of what we can achieve and what we can overcome in the face of adversity.

As we mark National Victims of Crime Awareness Week, I encourage all members to recognize the efforts of victims who have worked through their own personal pain and suffering and loss to help other victims, and the dedication of those professionals and volunteers who dedicate themselves, every day, to helping victims in their own community.

### CANCER CARE

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I am pleased to rise today on behalf of Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus in recognition of the month of April as Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Month and welcome members of the Canadian Cancer Society who are with us today in the House.

Today is Daffodil Day. On this special day, we ask all Canadians to take a moment to pay homage or reflect upon those who have passed and all who are living with cancer and to support them in their courageous fight against this disease.

Today I am myself proudly wearing a daffodil pin to commemorate my sister Marj, who passed away from cancer; and my sister Bonnie; my mom, Jean; and my sister-in-law Joanne, who are all cancer survivors; and also to my all-time hero, Terry Fox.

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, an estimated 186,000 new cases of cancer and 75 deaths from cancer will occur in Canada in a year. Prostate, lung, breast and colorectal cancer account for the top four newly diagnosed cancers. But to all who are on this arduous journey, we say to you again that you are not alone.

Our fight against cancer has had 75 years of success. At its inception in the 1940s, the cancer society reported that the cancer survival rate was 25%. Today, I'm pleased to say that over 60% of Canadians diagnosed with cancer will survive at least five years after their diagnosis. This is a great accomplishment, so I want to extend special congratulations to the Canadian Cancer Society as it marks its 75th anniversary this year.

1530

Again, thank you to the Canadian Cancer Society and especially to the valued volunteers and donors for all of your incredible work.

I encourage all Canadians to do something special for those living with cancer, to contribute in some way and to help bring the hope of Daffodil Day to full bloom: a day when no one will have to fear cancer.

### NATIONAL VICTIMS OF CRIME AWARENESS WEEK

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It's an honour to rise on behalf of Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus to respond to the

minister's statement on National Victims of Crime Awareness Week. As the minister mentioned, the goal of victims' week is to raise awareness about issues facing victims of crime. This includes the law, but also the services and programs that are in place to help victims and their families. The theme for this year is "We All Have a Role." It's a powerful statement, because indeed we do all have a role in preventing crime and assisting victims. Some go above and beyond in fulfilling that role, and I would like to highlight the work that we do on this very important occasion in the short time that I have.

In particular, I'd like to mention Caledon Dufferin Victim Services. A largely volunteer-run organization, Caledon Dufferin Victim Services offers 24/7 short-term crisis support, practical assistance and an information and referral program to victims of crime, abuse, tragic circumstances and disaster through a variety of services and programs.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the Ontario Network of Victim Service Providers for all the exemplary work they do in helping victims of crime across Ontario, again largely through the amazing, courageous, hard work of volunteers. It truly is astounding.

I would like to urge all Canadians to go online, do your research and find out how you can help victims of crime, because we must remember that we all have a role.

There's also a new organization that I'd like to mention called NeedHelpNow.ca. It is a resource designed to help youth in Canada who have been negatively impacted by the creation and distribution of sexual images or videos of themselves being shared among peers. In the wake of recent media coverage where this type of exploitation has ended in tragedy, raising public awareness on what youth can do if they find themselves in a difficult online situation has never been more needed. In creating the NeedHelpNow.ca website, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection is letting these kids know that they are not alone.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The member didn't use a prop; I didn't see it.

Further responses?

### CANCER CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It's also my pleasure to talk about the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil Day, the day when we have a chance to stand shoulder to shoulder with people who are fighting cancer.

Of course, this year there's an elephant in the room, because for over a thousand people who received diluted chemotherapy drugs, the system has let them down. What does it mean? Well, it means that time, effort and energy that should be building on the excellent cancer care programs that we have in Ontario are now being rerouted as we try to rebuild trust. The trust that was built upon for decades was shattered in one very sad news story on Friday, three weeks ago.

The minister also talked about the work that is being done in this House for the Skin Cancer Prevention Act. Well, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act was first introduced five years ago by me and reintroduced a number of times. It died three times on the order paper before it was reintroduced by the minister as a government bill. I'm really grateful that the government has brought forward this piece of legislation, but I would be even happier if I saw it on the schedule for debate. The government controls their schedule of debates, as opposed to a private member's bill, where we're slated, and mine is not till 2014. We now have the opportunity to move this forward way faster, so please bring it forward so that we don't see this going the way that other attempts have gone.

The same thing applies to flavoured tobacco. There's lots that can be done to protect people from developing cancer. There was a private members' bill that you and I co-sponsored, actually, Mr. Speaker, to ban single sales of flavoured tobacco. Well, there's a loophole in that bill that needs to be fixed.

All this is to say thank you to all of the volunteers who help make our cancer treatment centre—and support—what it is: something we can all be proud of.

#### NATIONAL VICTIMS OF CRIME AWARENESS WEEK

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I also rise today on behalf of the NDP caucus and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to celebrate or to commemorate the eighth annual National Victims of Crime Awareness Week. I think it's very crucial and very essential that we recognize the great work that victim services around the province provide in supporting those victims of crime.

I think I'd also like to particularly celebrate or recognize the great work of Victim Services of Peel, which operates in my region. Their staff and their volunteers form a part of a not-for-profit charitable organization that does excellent work in providing services for those who have been impacted by crime. If it wasn't for those volunteers, these services would not actually be possible, so we particularly have to recognize the great work of the volunteers.

This year's theme, "We All Have a Role," is also quite telling. I think it's important that we look beyond just providing services on a reactionary level and move towards considering what we can do to prevent victims of crime from ever being victims.

I also would like to raise the issue of the power of language. When we speak about people who have endured and survived crime, I think it's important to look at them as survivors of crime as opposed to victims of crime. They're people who have shown courage in the face of great tribulation and great obstacles in their lives, and let's celebrate their ability to survive and to persevere by referring to them as survivors.

I think we need to look at a couple of areas in order to prevent violence from occurring in the first place, to prevent crime in the first place. We need to address the

root causes of violence, which often are related to inequality and poverty, and tools and education to prevent violence in the first place. I think if we look at education as a tool to empower members of our community, we can ensure that people have the ability—parents, children, women, people who are more vulnerable in society have the tools to identify potential risks and have the tools to prevent those circumstances from happening in the first place.

While we recognize the survivors of crime, let's take steps to ensure that we not only react to the problems but prevent them from happening in the first place.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

#### NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member from Kenora-Rainy River has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Premier concerning social conditions in the First Nations communities. This matter will be debated tomorrow at 6 p.m.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Del Duca assumes ballot item number 27 and Mr. Berardinetti assumes ballot item number 3.

#### PETITIONS

##### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for petitions, and I think I'll turn to someone I haven't seen in a while, the member from Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my distinct pleasure to be considered for that privilege.

This petition is dated but it reads as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care unilaterally introduced cuts to the ophthalmology funding for physician services and diagnostic testing, retroactive to April 1, 2012"—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The Minister of Health is interrupting me here. She should have every reason to interrupt—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will read his petition.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** "Whereas the legislated cuts to the funding for ophthalmology diagnostic tests are up to 80%; and



"Whereas these cuts were implemented without consulting physicians about the impact such cuts will have on the health care of patients"—look what they're doing with long-term care;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to protect ophthalmology services and consult with physicians" and the OMA before making cuts to health care in the province of Ontario.

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition, and present it to Callum, one of the pages here on their second-last day—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further petitions?

1540

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

"Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

"Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

"Whereas electricity generated and used in north-western Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation."

I support this and will give this to page Theodore to deliver to the table.

### ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough's oldest and most well-established community; and

"Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

"Whereas historically Agincourt's electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

"Whereas communities, such as Scarborough–Agincourt, with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

"Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

"Whereas 'community of interest' is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

"Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

"Whereas the commission's report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

"Whereas the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety, with its northern Scarborough neighbours;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough–Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401."

I fully support the petition, and I give it to Glory.

### HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the United Senior Citizens of Ontario has expressed its concerns over the high costs of parking at hospitals in Ontario on behalf of its more than 300,000 members; and

"Whereas thousands of Ontario seniors find it difficult to live on their fixed income and cannot afford these extra hospital parking fees added to their daily living costs; and

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association Journal has said in an editorial that parking fees are a barrier to health care and add additional stress to patients who have enough to deal with;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Ontario's members of provincial Parliament and the ... government take action to abolish parking fees for all seniors when visiting hospitals."

I affix my name in full support.

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with developmental and other related disabilities; and

"Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs,

and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs, developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

"Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

"Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

"Whereas in some cases services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a 'custodial' care arrangement; and

"Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

"Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential supports, day program supports and other programs province-wide;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have in effect been cut;

"(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

"(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce;

"(4) To provide adequate new funding to agencies to ensure that the growing number of families on wait lists have access to accommodation supports and day supports and services."

I couldn't agree more, will sign it, and give it to Jack to be delivered to the table.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the latest policies from the" McGuinty-Wynne "government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I agree with this petition and I will send it down with Morgan.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Experimental Lakes Area is a one-of-a-kind whole ecosystem freshwater research station in northwestern Ontario;

"Whereas the facility has provided essential research since 1968 that has helped" develop and "improve both scientific knowledge and government policy;

"Whereas protecting our freshwater ecosystems will ensure we in the north can continue to safely enjoy and benefit from our natural resources;

"Whereas the decision of the federal Conservative government to close this facility was a political decision and not based on science or the interests of northerners;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to ensure the Experimental Lakes Area is reopened and continues to produce the ground-breaking scientific research that makes it renowned the world over."

I support this and will give this to page Jack to deliver.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the latest policies from the" McGuinty-Wynne Liberal "government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I support this petition, and I will send it with this great page, Madelyn.

#### WIND TURBINES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



"Whereas residents and municipalities across Ontario want the ability to veto and/or plan for industrial wind turbines in their community; and

"Whereas ratepayers in Ontario want all forms of energy generation to be affordable and reliable; and

"Whereas residents of Ontario want the feed-in tariff program to be eliminated; and

"Whereas residents of Ontario want to protect environmentally sensitive areas like the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges moraine from the development of wind turbines;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson's private member's bill, the Ensuring Affordable Energy Act, and call committee hearings immediately on the bill."

I'd like to affix my signature, thank all the people from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock for signing it, and give it to page Rosalin.

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's mineral wealth belongs to the people of Ontario;

"Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to enjoy their benefits;

"Whereas Ontario's Mining Act presently calls for resources mined in Ontario to be processed in Canada, yet allows cabinet to grant exceptions to the clause;

"Whereas these exceptions ensure residents of Ontario are told why our resources are being shipped elsewhere—information that can be used to better plan for infrastructure and job training needs to ensure a more competitive environment;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Mining Act to ensure that people living in Ontario maximize the benefit of their natural resources."

I support this and give this to page Kamryn to deliver.

1550

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encour-

aging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the latest policies from the" McGuinty/Wynne "government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;" and

Whereas the member from Simcoe–Grey serves his riding with distinction, agrees with this petition, and will continue to do so; and

Whereas the member from Wellington–Halton Hills also distinctly serves his riding and agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Oxford, who obviously serves his riding with distinction, agrees with this petition as well; and

Whereas the member from Thornhill agrees with this petition and serves his riding with distinction; and

Whereas the member from Whitby–Oshawa, who also serves her riding with distinction, agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, who serves with distinction in his riding, agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Oshawa serves his riding with distinction and also agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Durham serves his riding with distinction and also agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Halton agrees with this petition and also serves his riding with distinction; and

Whereas the member from Leeds–Grenville agrees with this petition and serves his riding with distinction; and

Whereas the member from York–Simcoe—she serves her riding with great distinguishing character; and

Whereas the member from Dufferin–Carleton—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Caledon.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** —Caledon, sorry—also serves her riding with great distinction; and

Whereas the member from Prince Edward–Hastings serves his riding with distinction and agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Kitchener–Conestoga agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Huron–Bruce also serves her riding with distinction and agrees with this petition; and

Whereas the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London agrees with this petition as well, and serves his riding with—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I would just remind the member that you should be reading the petition, and those others can be done individually.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I agree with this petition and my colleagues, as aforementioned, and I will affix my name to it.

#### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas currently the law takes the onus off of owners that raise violent dogs by making it appear that violence is a matter of genetics; and

"Whereas the Dog Owners' Liability Act does not clearly define a pit bull, nor is it enforced equally across the province, as pit bulls are not an acknowledged breed;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly passes Bill 16, Public Safety Related to Dogs Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011, into law."

On behalf of the over 1,000 dogs that have lost their lives due to the way they look and nothing about what they did, I'm going to sign this. I'm going to give it to Jason to be delivered to the table.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The time for petitions has expired.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### LOCAL FOOD ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES ALIMENTS LOCAUX

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 22, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 /  
Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant la Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I'm very pleased to rise today and share a northwestern Ontario viewpoint on Bill G36, the Local Food Act. In theory, this is a great idea. Local foods are vital to the health and well-being of our community and successful family farms are a vital part of a successful local economy.

When I think of a local foods act, instinctively I think of a blueprint, a document that outlines how government will support local foods and the concrete steps it will take to enhance and grow this very important industry. In this regard, I think of a long-term commitment to enhanced research that studies local and regional ecosystems that can help increase productivity and yields. I think of education that not only promotes healthy food choices to the public but that also promotes and encourages young people to pursue agriculture and agri-foods as a career choice.

I think of amendments to existing acts that make it easier for farmers and producers to focus on the act of farming. I think of government initiatives that promote, market and encourage the distribution of local foods to nearby markets, and I think of an integrated strategy that promotes health and wellness across Ontario by increasing access to local foods. In other words, I think of strategies intended to help our farmers produce their goods and increase access to local foods among segments

of the population who may have difficulties obtaining those foods.

When I look at this bill, however, I don't see those supports. I don't see any of those initiatives. I don't even see the framework for a plan. So what does the Local Food Act do? Well, in the preamble, there's a great deal of flowery language about the importance of local foods, with which I agree, but it trails off from there. When it comes to actual substance, if you can call it that, it provides for the future development of goals and targets once stakeholders whom the minister deems to be relevant are consulted.

In other words, this government hasn't even identified goals or targets that it hopes to accomplish with this act. They realize local food is important, and that's a start, but unfortunately, that's about as far as they got. The bill doesn't set out goals or objectives; instead, it says that the minister can feel free to do so at a later date.

It doesn't even outline a commitment to listening to all stakeholders if the government does decide to outline a plan. Instead, it says, "Before establishing or amending a goal or target, the minister shall consult organizations"—and this is the really important part—"that, in the minister's opinion, have an interest in the goal or target." In other words, the minister will hand-pick the people she consults with to ensure that the recommendations are consistent with what the Liberal Party wants them to be. Maybe we could have given the minister the benefit of the doubt, but we in the north have seen what happens when the government of the day gets to hand-pick their audience. We saw that with the Far North Act, where this government listened to everybody but northern First Nations, northern municipalities and northern residents.

In northwestern Ontario, our producers are already feeling that this province's agricultural policies are out of touch with our realities. For instance, programs such as forage insurance often leave out unique northern species, and there is a strong belief on the part of northern farmers that the program is in need of major review. The Agricorp program is also in desperate need of review. Farmers are growing frustrated with these programs, and despite making equal payments to be part of the program, northerners feel that they are being treated differently and unfairly.

Additionally, farmers in my region are worried that the local abattoir which they fought so hard to establish is at risk because exemptions that were put in place before the abattoir was established in the first place are still in place, causing it to miss out on a minimum of 200 head of cattle annually. It may not seem like much, but for a small northern operation, it is significant. Yet these are issues that are not being prioritized by this government.

Producers in my region are also looking for reassurances that the government is committed to the long-term viability of the Emo agricultural research station. In the northwest, we live in an entirely different ecosystem than a vast majority of the province, and this station provides vital supports, important research and knowledge that cannot be replaced. We know that the challenges we face



in our region are unique and our climate is unique, and we want the government to know and understand that.

These are the kinds of issues that a Local Food Act should be looking at. It should be looking at creating plans to ensure that these challenges are met. It should be ensuring that decisions that are made promote the long-term viability of agriculture in all regions of the province, but the act in its current form doesn't even guarantee that northwestern Ontario producers will have a seat at the table when the goals and targets are determined.

There's even more than that. A good and effective Local Food Act would not only help ensure the long-term viability of agricultural operations, but it would help improve access to those local foods. It's one thing to have a week that is intended to promote—and inform individuals about—the importance of local food, but what good is that week if people do not have the means or capacity to access these goods? As my party's critic for agriculture and agri-food pointed out, food is a necessity for all, but it is not equally accessible to all. That point is even stronger in northwestern Ontario.

1600

Certainly, I believe the government could be doing more to support our local farmers' markets. It's always a pleasure to be able to visit the Clover Valley Farmers' Market in Fort Frances and the Cloverbelt farmers' market in Dryden. The producers who supply these markets do an outstanding job of reaching out to other communities. Many of them travel hours to attend regular markets in Sioux Lookout, Kenora, Red Lake and Atikokan, but they also have their challenges, including transporting the food to those markets, as well as storage and refrigeration. Additional supports on the part of the government could certainly help improve access to these fresh goods in these communities, where agricultural production is not as prevalent.

One area where we are completely lacking in a strategy that is so desperately needed is in the Far North. At the best of times, access to fresh, healthy foods is limited and expensive. A four-litre bag of milk can cost upwards of \$20, a 10-pound bag of flour can cost upwards of \$40, and fresh fruits and vegetables are almost nonexistent or are cost-prohibitive for the people who live in these communities.

Foods that are readily available are foods that are preserved, such as pop and chips, and this has created a diabetes epidemic among First Nations youth and adults. Without access to healthy alternatives, obesity has become a problem. I'm sure everyone sitting in this Legislature understands how lethargic and zapped of energy a person can feel after eating unhealthy meals for a few days straight. Try living in a community where those are the only food options.

If this government truly wanted to be proactive, if it really wanted to make a difference, the minister, our current Premier, would create a coordinated strategy with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and the Ministry of Health to improve access to healthy, local foods in communities located in the Far North. Together they would

work with First Nations to develop strategies for the production of local foods, whether it be through the establishment of on-reserve greenhouses or finding crops that would grow in the unique climate and soils that exist in our Far North.

These communities aren't avoiding local foods; they simply do not have the capacity to make local food production a reality. When the minister speaks of opening new markets, these might just be the ideal new markets to open up.

I've spoken with First Nations, such as Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, who are interested in exploring strategies that could allow them to produce their own local foods. Again, maybe these are the types of strategies that this government should be developing.

Governments should be leading, but instead our Ontario government is lagging behind. There is nothing new, bold or innovative that is contained in this bill. In fact, the original incarnation, where the government planned to host Local Foods Week at a time when those foods are only being planted, just shows how out of touch this government is.

What is disturbing is that it isn't just the Liberal Party. This is the government and the bureaucracy that are proposing these changes. It's disturbing that the experts within the Ministry of Agriculture and agri-foods can't come up with advice or provide advice that shows knowledge of the industry that they're supposed to be promoting.

As my colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane pointed out, we in the NDP will be supporting this bill so it heads to committee, in hopes that major improvements will follow, but major improvements do need to come to make this bill worthwhile and reflective of the realities that we face across Ontario. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions? The Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thanks very much, Madam Speaker. Indeed, it was a pleasure for me to listen to my colleague from Kenora-Rainy River talk about the Local Food Act.

But I want to give you a good example about local food that I see every day. We're very fortunate in my area to have Kawartha Dairy. You know, you can go to Kawartha Dairy and buy three bags of 1% milk—\$3.99. If you do Peterborough math, you figure out that's about \$1.33 per bag of locally produced milk in my area.

If you go into any grocery store across the province of Ontario, you've all seen the displays about it, Speaker: Red Bull Energy Drink. I looked at the price of them just the other day. I was doing a little shopping last evening. I think the price of one can was, like, \$2.59. You consume Red Bull Energy Drink to make you play sports better, perhaps function better in the Ontario Legislature if you have a couple of those. But if you do the comparison, if you look at the value of that milk from Kawartha Dairy, about \$1.33 versus \$2.79, \$2.59—I think you've got to drive the point home that there's way more value and energy in consuming that 1% milk, which we all should do each and every day. So that's a great example of

having the consumer go out and buy a local product in my particular area that comes from Kawartha Dairy.

If you look at northern Ontario—I've had the opportunity to tour the Little Clay Belt in New Liskeard. It's a fabulous area for agriculture—a lot of locally grown food. I know the member there, of course, does a great job promoting that each and every day. And of course, the Greater Clay Belt is on the Quebec side of the border. But it goes to show you that even in northern Ontario, you could have a very vibrant agricultural sector. The plowing match was held there several years ago. A number of local markets—take the opportunity to buy local produce. But tomorrow, just compare Kawartha Dairy versus that energy drink. Kawartha Dairy is the better value every time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I'm glad to rise to speak to the comments of the member from Kenora–Rainy River. It's interesting when she talks about this government and the bureaucracy doing nothing for agriculture in the north. I don't think you have to go that far before you see the issues.

In eastern Ontario, a common complaint—even this summer, it took pressure from our party to get them to even tour the area to see the effects of the drought. There are serious problems. Going through Renfrew county, they're still feeling the effects, loss of hay, and even in our area. Although the corn and soybeans were bumper crops, anybody who was raising beef is having severe problems. There was no hay crop, so there's a shortage of hay. Of course, as everybody knows, or at least farmers know—I guess maybe the government doesn't know—we can't look at grazing for another month or two. This is continuing to be a problem. Farmers were forced to sell off their breeding stock to survive the winter. The cost of hay, of course, is at an all-time high. So it just speaks to the problems.

This bill does nothing to address the need to discuss the issues with the stakeholders. I think, when you look at the map outside of Toronto, this is not just something that has happened over night. It's still there, but it has been happening over more than a decade now. They've turned to other parties, because they don't see any hope with this government here.

We talked yesterday about the importance of having your own food supply and making sure that it's secure. We don't see that here; we see other provinces where farmers point to. In my riding, it's the province of Quebec, how much of a better job they do. I would like to think we can do things better in Ontario, and we've always shown that, but we may have to see some changes in this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Beaches–East York.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's indeed a pleasure and an honour to stand up and talk about the speech just made by my colleague from Kenora–Rainy River. She may be a relatively new member of the House, but she seems to have mastered it quite well.

I listened to her, and she raises points that are unique, I think, to her geographical area in the province, where she represents people we euphemistically call the Far North of Ontario. But the reality is that it's not that far north. When you think about other places in Canada—I have travelled to Yellowknife; I have travelled to Whitehorse. You can go there and see in the summertime people growing crops to eat. It's a short growing season, but there's a lot of sunlight, and if you are careful in what you grow and make sure that you plant it after the frost and harvest it before the frost, all kinds of vegetables and things can be produced. As she stated, there is no reason why, with some help, some of our First Nations communities in the north can't have better nutrition.

1610

It was my honour at one point to go on a northern tour when my colleague from Timmins–James Bay had a revenue-sharing bill before the House. One of the people on the tour was the now Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Honourable David Zimmer. I told him that he was about to get the biggest lesson of his whole life in terms of northern communities. I didn't take him into the houses where the people lived. I didn't take him into the streets or watch the barking dogs. I took him into the Northern store, and he was absolutely shocked and appalled at the costs of everyday food that people had to pay, like \$3 for an apple or the same for an orange, or the kinds of things that we take for granted in the city of Toronto.

I think that we all need to understand in Ontario that if we are going to improve the lives of people in those isolated First Nations communities, we have to have the better things that my colleague was just talking about.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Oakville.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to join the debate on Bill 36. I have some comments on those comments that were made earlier by the member for Kenora–Rainy River.

First of all, let me say that I think there are three elements to this that we're being asked to consider when we're being asked to support this bill, which I do wholeheartedly. One has been mentioned by a previous speaker, that being food security. You'd like to know within your own jurisdiction that you've got enough food and you've got access to food to be able to look after your own population.

We know that if we can get more people in Ontario to buy Ontario-grown fruits and vegetables or anything else that's produced on the farm, it's much better for the environment as far as the impact on greenhouse gases, transportation and those types of things.

We also know that if we can improve the market in Ontario, if we can get more people in Ontario, when they make those choices at the supermarket, when they determine which apple they're going to buy, which peach they're going to buy, to go out of their way a little bit to look for the Ontario produce—if we can get people to do that, what that is going to do is increase the sales of those



people in Ontario who grow those products, those being in the farm industry.

We want the residents of Ontario to be able to eat the local food that is grown here. I think that in the past attempts have been made to do this and they've met with quite a lot of success. I think most members would be familiar with the work that we've done for the craft brewers, for example, for Ontario brewed beer, for the wine industry, closer to home for me in Oakville, certainly just down the highway a little bit into the Niagara region. I think we've done a good job in promoting Ontario wines. It seems to me that we can do exactly the same thing here for local food.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member has two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Really what we're talking about, when we think about local food and we're making changes to legislation around local food—we really need to look, in my view, at two aspects. We need to look at marketing local food to people, which is good in a lot of areas of the province where we have that local food to market. But another big part of that is improving access to local food, as I talked about at length. What we really need to do is, we need to focus on giving people the tools so that they can then provide that local food for themselves. There has been a fair bit of discussion around the price of healthy food or even just the price of junk food—the price of food in general—on many First Nations reserves.

One thing, just as an aside: When I was elected I quickly learned that in living in northwestern Ontario just outside of Dryden, I live in southern Ontario compared to many, many communities in my riding. It's a different perspective altogether.

So it is a concern. It's probably one of the biggest concerns that I have since before being elected and it continues to this day, and that is access to quality food and how that's linked to the health of our aboriginal populations. What we need to do—and I'm not going to point the finger at any particular government because we all need to do it. We need to come up with legislation that affects Ontario as a whole—not bits and pieces of Ontario, not the urban centres of Ontario or just the GTA, but all of Ontario.

I have yet to see legislation that has come forward since I've been elected that has really impacted and been thoughtful and cognizant of the challenges right across this province, including many of the far north communities. We need all governments to step up, and we can start with this legislation today.

#### ROYAL ASSENT SANCTION ROYALE

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to a certain bill in his office.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The following is the title of the bill to which His Honour did assent:

An Act to authorize the expenditure of certain amounts for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013 / Loi autorisant l'utilisation de certaines sommes pour l'exercice se terminant le 31 mars 2013.

#### LOCAL FOOD ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 SUR LES ALIMENTS LOCAUX

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate? The member from Sarnia—Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I don't know whether that draft was to pay for gas plants or whether it was to pay the members—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** No, no. It's to pay your salary.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Oh, to pay the salaries of the members. I know the members, like the Attorney General and the Minister of Education and consumer—all the members here, whether in the third party or the opposition, we've all earned our money. I know they're doing an excellent job; I know they deserve to be paid.

It's a pleasure to rise today and speak to Bill 36, the Local Food Act, 2013, that was introduced by the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Agriculture has a central role to play in the health of Ontario's economy and is something that this government can no longer ignore.

The value that agriculture creates in the rural economy of Ontario makes up over 13% of Ontario's GDP. It's a sector that contributes some \$3.4 billion annually to the provincial and federal revenue stream. Moreover, the value of wages and salaries tied to Ontario's farming sector is estimated to be over \$7 billion annually.

Agriculture in Ontario is a big business. It has deep roots and requires an approach from government that recognizes the modern, advanced business environment that many farmers now operate in.

When Premier Wynne announced that she would be acting as her own Minister of Agriculture and Food, she noted that she would have a steep learning curve. As a lifelong resident of Toronto, Premier Wynne certainly has her work cut out for her in grasping the dynamic agricultural file.

In the past, this important portfolio has been served by some of the most senior ministers of the crown. I might add that during the Davis government, the role was filled for a number of years by the venerable Lorne Henderson, the member from the old riding of Lambton county. Minister MacCharles, across the aisle—I know she knows the Henderson family well. I might add—it's not in my notes—I'm also working on some background information and that to include Minister Henderson in the Agricultural Hall of Fame in Lambton county.

As the Liberal Party leader and Premier of the province of Ontario, many farmers I've spoken to in

Sarnia–Lambton have wondered aloud when and where Premier Wynne will find time to devote to the diverse group of stakeholders in the agriculture industry. Many worry that their issues will be sacrificed for the more glamorous issues that attract the media and the attention of the voters in the GTA. However, despite her inexperience after just about a month on the job, Premier Wynne set out to prove her naysayers wrong with the introduction of Bill 36, the Local Food Act.

As someone whose riding contains a large rural constituency and who has been working with agriculture for a number of years, I was certainly curious when the Premier announced she would be introducing this legislation after such a short time on the job. But after reading through Bill 36, I am disappointed to say that the Local Food Act is lacking in the substance, bold ideas and advancements that the Sarnia–Lambton agriculture stakeholders were looking for.

Upon originally hearing of the Local Food Act, I thought it was possible that maybe the Premier had adopted the strategies to fight hunger that I had laid out in my own private member's bill, entitled the fighting hunger with local food act. That bill, which will be introduced again shortly, would help communities in Ontario and food banks with the alarming growth of food bank use by Ontario residents.

The fighting hunger with local food act—which, again, I was very optimistic would appear in the Premier's Local Food Act, and, if it gets to committee, maybe we can have it included there—would have provided a tax credit for farmers who donated their perfectly healthy and nutritious unused produce to local food banks.

This is an idea that has had widespread support from members of the third party. I see the member from the Beaches applauding. He spoke in favour of it, as I remember, the last time it was introduced. I had support from the government side of the House and, of course, from my own colleagues. This is an idea, as I said, that had widespread support. In fact, it was highlighted in the 2012 Environmental Commissioner's report as a great opportunity for Ontario to glean some very nutritious food for Ontario's needy from the mountains of food that I say is wasted in Ontario each year. Unfortunately, that was not part of this act.

1620

When reading through Bill 36, I also hoped that the Premier would have adopted some of the very forward-thinking ideas that the member from Oxford laid out in the Ontario PC agricultural paper titled Respect for Rural Ontario.

With a title like the Local Food Act, the most obvious idea that the Premier could have borrowed would have been creating regional food terminals. The Ontario PCs believe that creating an additional local food terminal in Ontario—at least one, possibly in eastern Ontario, and one in southwestern Ontario—would help promote Ontario food and ensure that our retailers and restaurants and, by extension, consumers can connect with the small

producers and processors in Ontario to find the very best produce locally. This would be a great addition to the Local Food Act and would help shorten the distance that our local food travels before consumption.

As an example of how food travels through the province, let me talk about a local business that operates in my riding of Sarnia–Lambton and in the Minister of Health's riding of London North Centre. The business I'm talking about is called Sunripe. Sunripe is a terrific success story, and its stores in London and Sarnia highlight the outstanding quality of produce that is grown and harvested in Ontario every day. Let me read a short excerpt from the London Free Press about a regular day for Sunripe's owner, Will Willemsen:

"It's only noon but Will Willemsen's day is winding down.

"That's because he was up before 2:30 a.m. to do his buying run at the Toronto food terminal.

"The early hour allows him to snap up the best broccoli, the tastiest tomatoes and the prime pears.

"The produce is packed up, trucked away and will be on the shelves of his stores later the same day.

"It's been Willemsen's routine two or three times a week for the last 30 years since he opened his first small Sunripe store in Sarnia."

That's in the London Free Press of November 25, 2012.

This is a perfect example of a situation where the Premier and her government could have adopted some of the Ontario PCs' bold ideas in our agriculture white paper, like regional food terminals. By creating regional food terminals, say, in London, the Local Food Act would benefit local farmers and grocers by giving those in that region more immediate access to the best food and produce that Ontario can produce. Reduced fuel and transportation costs could be passed on to consumers. Increased access to restaurant owners and buyers could help grow local farms. It's a simple idea and it helps to reduce the distance that our food travels from the farm to our table. Again, this sort of bold idea was not in the Local Food Act.

Finally, and probably the most concerning to farmers in Sarnia–Lambton, is the fact that the Local Food Act does nothing to reduce the burden of red tape that Ontario farmers face when doing business in Ontario. Over 30 pieces of overlapping provincial legislation govern agriculture in Ontario. The average farmer, according to our records, spent 154 hours last year filling out government forms. That's time away from their families, their livestock, their crops, their equipment and from doing the things that can actually help them grow their business and produce the best products possible.

I hoped that the Local Food Act would include these important provisions. This would help reduce the burden of red tape and the maze of ministry branches and government agencies that farmers must deal with in Ontario.

Most of the content of Bill 36 is simply about the new Premier grabbing headlines in rural Ontario, where her party has lost its relevance. By simply rehashing policies



of the McGuinty government, the Local Food Act as it is currently constructed will do little to actually grow Ontario's ag industry. Those members on the government side of the House claim they are part of the new government. However, their claims ring somewhat hollow since they seem to be reusing a lot of the old policies of the old government.

The central truth that the Liberal government continues to miss is that agriculture as an industry supports our province's overall economy. It's an economic engine that creates jobs in every corner of this province, from our farms to rural communities to processing plants in big cities.

Over the past decade, the Liberals have made deliberate decisions that have damaged our agricultural industry. Every day we see farmers and agribusinesses struggling to compete because of high taxes, skyrocketing energy rates and a thicket of red tape. These are concerns of the industry that are repeated around the province.

I'm hopeful that the Local Food Act makes it to committee and then that the Premier and her government will seriously consider making those types of substantial amendments that the industry stakeholders are calling for. If not, the Local Food Act will be just another example of this Liberal government's disinterest with the real needs of Ontario's agriculture industry.

I might add—I have a few seconds left—that it was in the 1980s that the member who I spoke about formerly, the Minister of Agriculture, Lorne Henderson—he wasn't agriculture at the time—led a drainage committee study, a select committee appointed by the Premier at that time, that made radical and long-awaited improvements to local drainage. And the success of agriculture in Ontario—all across Ontario, to this day—is the benefit of that select committee and the members from all parties who served on that. I don't think there's anybody in the House right now that would have been there, but I know I read the report—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Jim Bradley—he might have been a page then; I'm not sure. But anyway, thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to speak today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I'm delighted to stand and comment on the speech just made by my colleague, the member from Sarnia-Lambton. I was absolutely delighted to find out that he wants to bring back his bill which would encourage farmers to receive a tax allowance for those crops that might ordinarily go to waste.

I remember the debate that we had in this House some number of years ago now around this very issue. In this province, we have food banks in literally every town and city across the whole length and breadth of Ontario. In those food banks, very often the thing that is most missing is to have fresh fruit and vegetables, and then to see farmers forced to plow those under is really a crime. I do know that in the food bank in Toronto, which is ably run by my friend Gail Nyberg, who lives in the riding of

Beaches—East York, they are constantly looking for not only food, but they're looking for money in order to buy fresh produce. That is something that is disastrously missing from the diets of people who live on the margins.

I do know myself; I have attempted to live on what's called "the welfare diet" on three occasions. The first two times they gave me money and I was able to buy some forms of fresh produce. The third time I went on the diet, though, they gave me the basket. The basket, if you go into the food bank, is what you get to subsist on for seven days. The basket contained no fresh fruit or vegetables at all. I will tell you that at the end of one week of eating canned food, unhealthy food, pastas, things that are heavy in carbohydrates but not much nutrition, you would appreciate what the member from Sarnia-Lambton is intending to do.

I look forward to him bringing back that bill so that Ontarians—or the poorest people—can live better.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I'd like to thank the honourable member from Sarnia-Lambton for his remarks. He focused a lot on the fact that the Premier of Ontario—Premier Wynne—is also the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I'm sure that he's well aware of this, that Dennis Timbrell, who was the MPP for Don Mills, was the last agriculture minister in the Bill Davis government. They share the same general area of the city of Toronto. I'm sure that the honourable member, Mr. Timbrell, had served the Ontario rural community and farmers quite well, just as the Premier is currently doing at this point.

It's disheartening to sit here and listen that the member opposite says that our government has lost its relevance in rural Ontario. Well, I can tell you that perhaps to the Conservative friends, that's what they're hearing, but we're hearing otherwise. Our agricultural community is actually quite pleased by the support that they've been getting over the last number of years.

The Risk Management Program is something that was well welcomed and well appreciated by our farming community. We continue to strive and work at ways to improve our agricultural sector.

We constantly hear about high hydro rates. I spoke to this yesterday. These are challenging times, but I can tell you that in the year 2003-04, when the party opposite froze hydro rates, it cost Ontario ratepayers \$4 billion in one year, so I think that they should look at themselves before they throw stones.

1630

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The member for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** My almost-seatmate in front of me from Sarnia-Lambton spoke very wise words. It's always nice to hear him get up and speak and talk about a government that's out of touch, if I use the words across from the member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

It's a huge part of our economy—\$3.4 billion—the second-largest contributor to the economy in the prov-

ince, but sadly, it's been forgotten by this government. We see that. If you look at the results of the last election, it's shown that people in rural areas are very disappointed with the actions of this government, and they are looking for help from other parties.

It's no wonder; I guess the empty motions of the new Minister of Agriculture—issued the tire tax that came out just recently with no consultation with the ag industry. It was huge. We heard numbers of over 2,000% increases, which is really unheard of, but those are the types of things—a new tire tax affects the farming industry in a big way. It probably shuts down any of these businesses that are close to the border, because they'll just go elsewhere. In my area, dealers have called in and said they notice the difference already; they go into Quebec to buy their equipment, where they don't pay the tax.

It's too bad. We have our critic from western Ontario, Mr. Hardeman, who's worked hard with the industry and worked on the risk management plan that the Liberals were shamed into adopting at the last moment, just before the last election, but it's too little too late. I think the agriculture community is looking for more from the government and hoping for better things in the future.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** The Local Food Act is extremely important, as many members have said before, and something that we do know is that the number of farmers across Ontario is falling. There are not as many farmers as there were years ago, and if we're going to have a sustainable local food production industry, we need to do more to make farming more viable and attractive as a career opportunity for young people.

Part of the Local Food Act—it's good that it's opening up conversation, but if we want to continue to have good local food production in Ontario—all over Canada, as a matter of fact—we have to make sure that we promote farming as a career that's viable, that is a career that you can make into a lifetime career, and sustain yourself and pay your bills and be comfortable in retirement. That's something that we believe: If we're going to have a Local Food Act, we need to promote farmers to continue the Local Food Act, so that we can make sure that it won't be a situation where we won't have locally produced food, and we won't be able to enjoy the benefits of the people who work in that industry.

The government should make it easier for young people to pursue careers in farming by looking at perhaps creating a new apprenticeship program. It would be wonderful if young people could go on-site and work side by side with farmers—get to know the career, get to know what they're in for. Then, hopefully, they will choose that as a lifelong path to prosperity in their own lives, because we know that farmers are very valued in our society, and we want to make sure we continue that path so that we're not stuck here in Ontario looking to export food and having to eat food from other countries. I would prefer to eat locally homegrown food in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Right off the get-go, I'd like to thank the members from Beaches—East York, Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry and also London—Fanshawe for their kind words and comments on my remarks.

I just saw the Minister of the Environment; I spied him across the hall—across the Leg. We talked about a number of people that he would remember—he's got a little longer history than most of us here—the Honourable Lorne Henderson, the Honourable Bill Stewart, and of course Helen Johns, Dennis Timbrell and Noble Villeneuve. We're talking about some agriculture ministers in the past from the Conservative caucus; that, by no means, is a list of all of them.

I was speaking about the Tile Drainage Act and how important it was to Ontario. I see the minister smiling. He knows how important that was to Ontario.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Yes, it was a great career move for the former member from Lambton. I'm proud to have succeeded him here—a few years later, obviously. Anyway, he was a great friend of my family and myself, as well.

Also, as the member from Beaches—East York talked about, I am going to introduce my food bill again. It is a real crime that every year in Ontario over 27 million pounds of food goes to landfill or is plowed under when there are people going wanting, children and families that would enjoy that food here in the bigger cities. In the smaller towns like Petrolia we have food banks, and also in Sarnia—the Inn of the Good Shepherd, among others. Even the farmers—it costs them money to dispose of this food, which they would gladly part with. My bill talks about a 25% non-refundable tax credit, which is very affordable. The spinoff on that, I think, was \$6 for every dollar we'd invest, a minimal investment on the part of the government—around \$250,000, if I remember right—which would generate this food.

Again, Madam Speaker, I'm proud to have had an opportunity to stand and speak to this bill today and I look forward to it getting to committee where we can make those kinds of improvements to it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Bramalea—Gore—Malton.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It gives me great pleasure to be able to rise today to speak on Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013. It's an interesting bill because it gives us an opportunity to talk about a lot of different issues that revolve around food. It goes without saying, but food is one of those necessities of life. When we start talking about local food, it opens up the debate to talk about the benefits of nutrition and its impact on our society. We can talk about what a sustainable province or a sustainable community looks like. I would contend or I would assert that a sustainable community is a community where you can grow and eat a lot of local food. The more you're able to do that, the more you can demonstrate that that community is sustainable.

This bill would give us an opportunity to look into that, but there is a problem when you look at the pur-



poses of the bill. I'm reading from the front page. The purposes are quite good, I have to admit.

"1. To foster successful and resilient local food economies and systems throughout Ontario.

"2. To increase awareness of local food in Ontario, including the diversity of local food.

"3. To encourage the development of new markets for local food."

Those are great purposes. Those are great goals. This act, though, doesn't provide the substance to actually achieve these goals.

But let's talk about some of these goals. My colleague from Kenora-Rainy River spoke on this issue very ably. If we want to encourage local food, one issue is promoting it, but a second issue is creating the conditions so that people can actually grow food in their communities.

There are two parts to that. One is that we have to look at what incentives we're creating for farmers, what conditions we're creating so that farmers can actually make a livelihood off of farming. Second, we have to look at awareness. In our school curriculums, we know the impact of nutrition on children, on their success in schools. One of the most basic things, and we can point to all sorts of studies that confirm, is that when we talk about kids in kindergarten and starting off in school, there is a rise of attention deficit disorder and kids who aren't focusing and children who have a problem performing. There's a clear connection between the type of food that those children eat and their ability to be successful at school.

My sister was a kindergarten teacher and she just informally encouraged the students in her class and spoke to their parents and encouraged them to make sure that the kids had healthy snacks, and discouraged sugary snacks. She found, just colloquially in her own classroom, that by encouraging good foods in her class she immediately noticed a difference. Children in her class were more focused, were able to perform better, were able to be better students in the classroom, and it was a simple shift in just encouraging the parents to have better snacks that weren't so sugary.

1640

If we look at what we're doing as a province and we talk about health promotion, often the slogan for creating a healthier society is about making the healthy choice the easier choice. If it's easy to be healthy, people are more likely to do it. If you look at the type of foods that are available in our grocery stores, there are packaged foods and there are processed foods. They take up the vast majority of any given supermarket, and the fresh produce section is quite small in comparison. So we have a lot of work that we can do.

There is an interconnection between these things. If we promote a strong and vibrant agricultural sector in our province, if we make the conditions more favourable for agriculture, for farmers to get out there and to earn a livelihood farming, and we increase the production of locally produced foods, we can encourage those to be

sold in our local grocery stores. That could have a positive impact on health. That would impact children in education, but it also would impact our health care system. There's an interconnection between all these issues. Sometimes you look at an issue and think that it's only going to impact one area, but there is so much that could be done if we see the connection between all things.

We're in a particular circumstance now in the province where we have a struggling economy; we have fiscal realities that we have to address. If we looked at ways of addressing these cost issues by combining our approach—so if we want to reduce health care costs, we invest in providing good, nutritious food and making access to this good, nutritious food easier so that we have a healthier diet. Diet can prevent a number of illnesses, and it would reduce our costs in the health care system. So there are investments that we can make that would reduce our costs in the long run, and this is one of those examples.

If we make a real investment in encouraging local foods and making healthy, fresh produce more available, we can impact our communities and our societies on many levels. We can have, on the beginning of our society, on our youth—we can encourage young children and students to be more successful and more productive because they can eat better foods. But on the other end of the spectrum, we can ensure that we have an aging population that's healthier, that has access to good foods so that in their aging, in the later stages of their life, they don't rely on the health care system as much because they're healthier. So there are a lot of things that we can do if we really focus in on this.

The idea of having a Local Food Week is a good start in terms of encouraging and promoting the fact that there is local food available here in Ontario. What is somewhat of a concern is the fact that the Local Food Week that's proposed is the same week as the agriculture awareness week. Depending on how that's framed, it shouldn't take away from the issues that affect farmers. Their issues are more than just promoting local foods. There are many issues that farmers face, and they should have a time and a week to be able to promote their issues and their concerns. So I'm concerned about the framing of that. If it's going to overlap, will that take away from the ability of farmers to promote their issues and their concerns, like the eco fees which are increasing in a way that's causing a dramatic impact on their financial viability? We have to look at how we can address that in a way that helps farmers out but at the same time maintains, obviously, our commitment to protecting the environment. At the same time, if we're promoting local food in a way that works synergistically with Agriculture Week, that's fine, but if it's taking away from the message and farmers can't get out their concerns, I'm troubled by that.

If you look at the direction that our province is headed in—and I noticed that in my community, in Peel region, we have suburban sprawl. We have suburban communities that are sprawling out, and they're taking over

some of the great farm land that was out there. So we have to look at, as a province, what do we want our province to look like? What do we want our agriculture sector to look like in the future? If we continue to sprawl into communities and into areas where there is great farm land that can be very productive, that can ensure that we have local produce—we have to make sure that we do develop policies that discourage sprawl into areas which are good farm land and that we make sure that our cities are planned around that.

Another idea that I think is essential is that, all too often, we are cutting out areas that can produce food. Our communities are all commercial or industrial or residential, and they don't have green spaces where you actually can grow food. I think that we create a disconnect, then, with our ability to grow food and where we live, and I think integrating those and having spaces in our communities where we grow food—we see the connection between the land and the food that we produce, and we see that in our communities, to make them more sustainable, there should be spaces in each community to grow food.

One of the things that wasn't touched on in the Local Food Act is the idea of community farms, local farms, using green spaces in our communities to grow food, to grow produce, and integrating that, in terms of education, with young people in our classrooms: teaching children about farming techniques, teaching them about nutrition, showing them the connection between growing food in a sustainable way and eating that food and being healthy and the greater picture.

The education curriculum in Australia includes a section that talks about healthy eating, and they actually have a component where they talk about reading food labels and about the benefits of fresh produce over packaged fruit.

Starting with an education component, we can build a movement where we say sustainable societies are based on having a connection between your community and the ability to grow food; that local food makes your communities more sustainable; that if we promote and encourage local food, we can have communities that will be healthier in the long run; that we'll have a more vibrant society, and we can do that by expanding the discussions and looking at the connection between having good nutrition, having good food and the impacts on the rest of society.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The minister for seniors.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm pleased to have two minutes on this particular bill. I know it has been discussed for quite some time, but I am pleased to add to the remarks made by the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton. I call it the LFA, the Local Food Act, which is a wonderful piece of legislation proposed by our Premier, Ms. Wynne. It goes a long way to bringing to our attention the products that we have in Ontario, especially from our farmers.

In my own area, I have to say, coming from York West in Toronto, that we don't have any more farmland

available. But a couple of weeks ago, I was approached by a member of the Delta Family Resource Centre, and because they know the value of fresh local food and produce, they said, "We have approached the city to see if we could use a portion of Islington Parkette to plant some vegetables for the community." I said, "What a great idea, but you have to approach the city for that." "Well," they said, "we're coming to you because the city already said no." I said, "That's strange, because if you go one mile west of here, we have allowed it at Black Creek Pioneer Village," which is a wonderful place to visit. I said, "We are already doing that." He said, "Oh, that's great. That's where I'm headed, and I hope that we get some land over there." I said, "What do you do with that?" He said, "We just leave it open for people to go and pick up the produce when they are ready." I said, "That's a great idea."

So there is interest out there, Speaker, and I hope that this bill, as it moves along, will come back much stronger and will highlight the wonderful products that our people are producing in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to join the discussion today on Bill 36, the Local Food Act, and to comment on my colleague from Bramalea–Gore–Malton's speech. It's so nice to hear an urban member talk about the value of the agriculture produce that we have here in Ontario and to promote places for produce to be grown in the cities as well as—even in my small communities, they kind of like these community gardens because they get to socialize with each other and, I'm sure, share the stories of how you can grow your beans or your tomatoes better. I think it's wonderful that the knowledge is being shared.

He did mention about more education in our schools, and I think the member from Peterborough will agree that Lloyd Wicks, a farmer from my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, was always a strong promoter. In fact, he wanted to take kids out of the city schools for a week and bring them to the country to stay on a farm so they would understand how things are grown, the value of keeping agriculture a strong industry in the province of Ontario. It's not a bad idea. I don't know exactly how we'd do that yet, but it is important.

1650

You also mentioned the value of good nutrition, and the kids' attention in schools when they are well-nourished. We have wonderful food programs in our schools, and a lot of our farmers donate food to those programs. But it is true, and the quality—I know the DHA factor in milk was always brought up. If you had that in the early formative years, there are tons of studies of how that improves the cognitive ability of infants.

We have a lot of great innovation here in Ontario. We'd like to certainly spread the good agriculture story throughout. Unfortunately, this bill is really not helping the farmers in their production or even expand internationally, which we need to see.



I appreciate the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton and his interest and his advocacy on behalf of Ontario farmers.

I'll look forward to further debate on this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** There has been a lot of discussion this afternoon, and really since this bill was brought forward, about a lack of clear targets and a lack of clear goals. In many respects, this is a plan to enact a plan. It's very vague.

One of the things that isn't included in this act is a buy-Ontario commitment that would make it the law that Ontario's money is spent here in Ontario. This would encourage food processors to purchase local foods. Since being elected, this is something that I have been very supportive of, not just for across Ontario, but even when you look at Kenora–Rainy River. I talk a lot about how big the area is. The point that I have been trying to raise—and I've even gone as far as creating some "I Love NWO: I Shop Local!" bumper stickers that people have been driving around in the riding. It hits home that there are a lot of market factors that are beyond our control at the local level, but we do have a tremendous buying power, and that can be used to do some real good.

One of the places that we can best direct our resources and strengthen our local economy is by supporting our local farmers and our local producers. If we don't support these local producers, who will? I think that's our responsibility, as MPPs at the local level. I think it's also the responsibility of our government, collectively, to make sure that we help our industry right across this province; that in addition to having a responsibility to create the factors that attract business, we also need to maintain that business too, whether it's everything from electricity rates, which are instrumental to some industries, all the way to helping make sure that our farmers have a market. We need to do that in this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I thought the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton did an excellent presentation this afternoon.

I just want to quote from a recent edition of the Ontario Farmer. I thought it was very interesting. It says:

"Burford-St. George apple growers Jay Howell and Tom Pate delighted in grilling a succession of 10- and 11-year-old pupils from Brantford and Brant county grade schools who passed by them and their grinding equipment.

"The kids were learning how to make apple pumice for cider. They were among 850 children taking part in the 18th annual Bite of Brant agriculture education program at the Burford fairgrounds on April 10 and 11" of this year.

"As each stood in line bearing an apple and waiting for a turn at the crank, Howell and Pate took turns asking them repeated questions about the fruit that has brought their families a livelihood for generations and St. George

local fame for its annual AppleFest, and the cider they make for area stores and restaurants.

"Apples need what out of the sky?" Howell asked" one of the students.

"Right, sun and rain," he repeated. "Sun for photosynthesis. Say that word again"

"Pate had his questions ready.

"What does the bee do? Pollinate, right," ... and if the answer was correct, he let the pupil place the apple and turn the crank.

"Grade 4 student Phoenix Henhawk said he has learned that apple cider can be made out of almost any variety of apple, 'but that Empire apples make it'"—the most tart and are the very best.

"Teacher Ginny Goldspink was right there with her split Grade 4/5 class from King George Public School in Brantford, observing the farmers as they delivered hands-on lessons.

"She was one of several teachers who have worked with the program over the years.

"Bite of Brant is a real joy for the kids and a good learning experience. Already we've learned a lot about healthy eating," she said of her present class. "Now we're starting to learn about ecosystems, how plants and animals work together and how it's good for farming."

"Jean Emmott, coordinator of the Bite of Brant program, as well as her army of volunteers from various sectors of local agriculture, and public and Catholic grade school teachers, were all smiles as they watched the 18th edition unfold with precision."

It's a great program for students, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you to everyone who joined in the debate.

I hope the minister responsible for seniors will help his community members who want to set up that community farm.

I appreciate the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock recognizing my celebrating the importance of farmers. In fact, both of my parents come from farming families and farmed their whole lives, so I have a connection to farming, even though I don't live on a farm anymore. I lived on a farm at one point.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I am, indeed.

Thank you very much to the member from Kenora–Rainy River for bringing up that point of Buy Ontario. I think that might be an initiative where we spend our Ontario dollars—whether it's provincially funded or provincially run organizations—and encourage those organizations to have to spend their money, and any food that's provided. It was an NDP plan that was promoted and presented before, and I think that's something that we should look at again. It might find its way into this bill if we have our input on it, because I think that's a meaningful way of encouraging local farmers to be able to get some buy-in and a way of putting some dollars behind our commitment.

Thank you to the Minister of Rural Affairs for also joining in the debate.

I think we have an opportunity here to gain a lot of ideas and to work on making this bill—because the ideas that it hopes to achieve are good ideas. The bill itself—I think it was put very well—is a plan to make a plan, but we can turn it into a real plan if we get it into committee and perhaps look at ways to make it more meaningful and make it work towards promoting an education platform for young people, promoting awareness about local food, the connection between local food and nutritious food and the health of our society and our communities, and looking at ways to make farming more viable, more sustainable in our community here in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It's always an honour to rise on behalf of the residents of Dufferin-Caledon to discuss the bill before us. Today we are here discussing Bill 36, the Local Food Act.

First of all, Speaker, a wee bit of credit is due, because the government has at least identified a crucial area that requires action: promoting our local foods in Ontario. Any of us who've had an Ontario apple or an Ontario strawberry at the height of their respective seasons knows that there is absolutely no comparison between Ontario-grown fruit and imported fruits. The same can be said for vegetables, and the same can be said for meats.

With such good food, such great produce, comes pride. Our local farmers, our local processors are proud of the food they produce. Nothing makes them happier than seeing it enjoyed by their friends, family and neighbours. It's that pride we must remember when crafting legislation such as this, because when someone is proud of something, they're always willing to talk about it. That's the essence of promotion.

In this case, when the former Premier prorogued the Legislature last fall—which in effect killed the first Local Food Act—in one way it presented an opportunity. It presented an opportunity—actually, a pretty rare opportunity—to take the bill that had been introduced and go around Ontario to all the different farmers, processors and associations, and all the advocacy groups, and ask them what they thought of it. In fact, it was an opportunity for the government to incorporate some of the opposition's points about the bill.

As you know, Speaker, I get the feeling sometimes that the members opposite in the government sometimes think we in the PC caucus would be mad or upset if they stole some of our ideas. I have to say, I, for one, certainly wouldn't mind—but I digress, although I did want to get it on the record so that members opposite know that we don't mind if you take some of our ideas. I say that because if they had addressed some of the concerns our critic the member from Oxford had with the previous version, then we would have a stronger bill before us here today.

The PC caucus even put out an entire white paper on this subject. It's called *Paths to Prosperity: Respect for*

Rural Ontario. I would sincerely encourage all members opposite to go online and read it. There are a lot of good ideas in there.

**1700**

But alas, true to form, the Liberal government decided they knew best and largely ignored our suggestions. And we weren't the only ones, as our critic the member for Oxford pointed out in his leadoff speech on Bill 36. He indicated no less than 81 specific actions or strategies that could have been incorporated into a Local Food Act, and yet the government only included one of these actions in this bill.

At its core, though, the intentions of this bill are good. Local food is something we can all support, and nowhere is this more evident than at the local markets and communities in Dufferin-Caledon.

There's a term that I like. It's when you describe someone as a "localvore." A localvore is someone who's committed to eating locally grown and produced food. A newer term perhaps, but the concept is very old. It is an appropriate play on words, I think, because all food can be local, whether it be meat, vegetables or fruit, and it can be grown locally. That's something we ought to support and encourage. Certainly in Dufferin-Caledon, we are big supporters of local food.

September is Eat Local Month in Caledon, which provides a perfect opportunity to celebrate the local food message as it draws attention to the many wonderful farmers in our region. Many of these farmers sell their products directly to consumers from their farms, and I want to share a perfect example of what I think local food is all about. There is a website, the Hills of Headwaters Tourism, where you can find the listings of many local farms that offer on-farm markets and pick-your-own operations in the community. I really like this example because it offers a practical and convenient way for residents to seek out local food options in their community.

It really is a shame there is not much more substance in Bill 36, because the premise behind it of promoting local food consumption really is an important one.

The one concrete thing Bill 36 does do is establish Local Food Week in Ontario. This is certainly a worthwhile endeavour. However, taken on its own, without any real support to farmers or processors who are grappling with problems like exorbitant tire fees and skyrocketing hydro rates, just to name two, it really isn't enough.

While I applaud proposing a provincial Local Food Week, I'd be remiss if I didn't point out that this is already being done at the local level. The town of Caledon, for example, has proclaimed September 9 to 15 as Eat Local Week. This is a great opportunity to explore some of the excellent local food our region has to offer. And it's part of the reason I think the Local Food Week aspect of Bill 36 is a good one, because I've seen it done locally. In Dufferin-Caledon, we are very lucky to be surrounded by farmland, and every chance I get, I encourage everyone to enjoy the local fare and support our farmers.



Another great example of how much local food matters in Dufferin-Caledon is the establishment of Dufferin.Biz. This is a joint program between the county of Dufferin, Dufferin municipalities and local groups that is designed to market all the great things about the local community in Dufferin. And of course, you guessed it, agriculture and food are a big part of the community in Dufferin county. In fact, the Orangeville town hall was once the town's public market. Orangeville's main street, Broadway, would be lined with cattle every other week in those old days, with potatoes, hay, grains and many other agricultural products for sale. While these days have long since passed—the site of the Orangeville Farmers' Market is actually behind the current Orangeville town hall—they are still remembered in the carvings of the town hall. Carved cattle heads remain over the windows of the town hall to this day. I think these cattle heads are a great example of our history in Orangeville because they remind us that agriculture and food have always been an important part of our town's heritage and will continue to be an important part of our future.

That's why services like Dufferin.Biz are so great, because they help connect people with that rich history and keep traditions alive for future generations. Needless to say, local food is important to Dufferin-Caledon residents.

While I mentioned earlier our farmers who sell our products directly, I'd also like to point out what is probably the number one access point to local food for most people in Ontario: our farmers' markets. In Dufferin-Caledon we embrace local food, and our farmers' markets are always brimming with customers. Personally, I've always enjoyed shopping at the local farmers' market to buy our fruit and vegetables in season. It's a great way to support producers of locally grown products, but also to take in the beautiful weather and enjoy the freshness of eating seasonally.

They also serve as a good chance to spend some time talking to the vendors and farmers and learn more about their products and how they're grown. That's why you'll be able to make healthy eating choices for your families that you can enjoy in season while at the same time being able to thank those who work hard to produce that food for your family to enjoy.

The Orangeville's farmers' market opens May 11 and Caledon's on June 11. I know there will be a great turnout, as there is every year. We also have farmers' markets in Amaranth, Shelburne, Inglewood and, new this year, Southfields. Every year, of course, we have the local fairs in Dufferin-Caledon to celebrate our agricultural community as well.

I suppose the main point of what I'm trying to articulate here is that while local food may seem like a new trend or initiative, the reality is that at the local level, at least in Dufferin-Caledon, it really is just business as usual. Obviously, the government's attempts to promote local foods are welcome, no matter how much they fall short, but the reality is this government could do far more to help local food producers.

I want to share with you five reasons to eat locally that the town of Caledon actually distributes every year. It leads with "Taste and Nutrition," "Farmland Preservation," "Local Economy," "Food Safety" and "Sustainability." I couldn't have said it better.

We have done an excellent job within our municipalities and within our local governments to understand the value of what individuals do on the farm and to translate that into our new residents and our neighbouring communities so that they appreciate what we are able to offer because of the unique circumstances that we have.

In closing, I'd like to say to the Premier: It's a start; it's appreciated. But it's really just scratching the surface. That's why I would hope the bill will be amended at committee and be strengthened appropriately so that it can really make a difference in promoting local food in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to stand here and to talk about G36, the Local Food Act, and to comment on the remarks made by the member from Dufferin-Caledon. She did a really good job of describing what local food means to the people in her community, about local farmers' markets, as have—I've been listening very intently to a lot of the speakers. I'm very interested in this issue. I've been listening intently to a lot of the remarks from people from all sides of the House. All the members have done a very good job of outlining what local food means to their region.

You could go on a fantastic food tour if you took all the speeches and picked out all the local food haunts and the local food processors and farmers' markets. You could go on a tour of Ontario like has never been done before. If there's one thing that bringing this bill forward again has done, it has allowed us the opportunity to talk about local food, to put plugs in for all our local places.

But the member also mentioned—and something that we're hoping to do as well—that when this bill moves forward to committee, we actually put some meat on the bones of this bill and actually make this bill so it helps—this isn't a first step in local food. Local food has taken huge steps already. What we want this bill to do is help local food, not simply be a promotional tool so the government can seem to get in front of the local food movement.

There are things we can do, and many things have been mentioned on all sides of how we could improve access to local food—certainly not the quality of local food; we have fantastic local food here. But access to local food is a big thing, and I think that's something, that we could all amend this bill to make it much better for all the people in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I want to say that I have very strong support for this bill, and I was glad to hear it from the member who just spoke because I think it's exceedingly important for not only our farming community, but our entire province.

Local food, of course, offers us a high degree of safety; we can't always guarantee that that food which is imported has that quality. It's also fresh, it's very tasty, we will find, and it provides employment. So I think it is exceedingly important to bring forward legislation of this kind.

1710

One of the members speaking previously mentioned agricultural land and the protection of agricultural land for the purposes of farming. A lot of people don't recognize that there's not all that much arable land in Canada. They say, "Well, Canada is a large country," but there's not that much farmland that's really available when you look at the entire country and how much is actually useful for farming in terms of the temperatures that are available—in other words, the climate—and the quality of the soils.

When I hear those who are advocating for the mindless development of good farmland, I become very, very concerned about that. I know that in years gone by I've watched in the Niagara Peninsula as very valuable farmland has been gobbled up by development. Where you have a microclimate that is special and where you have soils that are special, we've unfortunately lost a lot of that agricultural land.

Those farmers are top-notch farmers. They know what they're doing. They produce quality food for all of us. I think we have an obligation to go to the farm gate itself, if necessary, as many of us do in the local area, or to the farmers' market, or when we go to a major grocery store, to ensure that we choose food that is Ontario-grown. We cannot go wrong with that, and I think the member agrees with that as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate here today and commend the remarks from my colleague from Dufferin—Caledon, taking us on a tour of Orangeville's farmers' market. We all have farmers' markets, especially in rural Ontario, that we like to brag about. I have many in my riding of Prince Edward—Hastings, which is a very rural riding with great agricultural roots. The Belleville Farmers' Market will be opening soon; unlike my colleague from Dufferin—Caledon, I don't have the exact dates that they will be opening with me, but keep an eye out.

I can tell you that as I've toured the province as the critic for small business and red tape—and let's be clear that farmers are small business people, and some of them are actually quite large business people. The impediments that they continue to run into across the province when doing business are ERT—and that's not the emergency response team; that's energy prices, red tape and taxation. We talked a little about some of the atrocities in the Green Energy Act, and the Minister of Energy just spoke moments ago about the fact that we don't have that much agricultural land in the province anymore. We're losing it all the time, and these solar farms that they're putting up, in many cases, are covering agricultural land

where we should be growing local fruits and vegetables. So the Minister of the Environment is complicit in some of the agricultural property that's disappearing before us in the province as well.

**Red tape:** I can tell you that red tape is binding up our farmers and our agricultural people. They just simply can't get their products to market, whether it's wine growers in my riding, in Prince Edward county, who are growing grapes—they're doing a wonderful job putting some award-winning products out there on the market, if they can get it on the market. But that's the problem: They can't get it to market. There are some very serious problems with the LCBO.

We've talked about taxation. I know the member from Dufferin—Caledon spoke about the tire tax, but that's just the latest tax grab on our agricultural people in rural Ontario. We have so much to be proud about in the province. Let's encourage these people to grow more and add to our economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently, as I always do, to the member from Dufferin—Caledon. What she had to say was insightful. People must know—I make no pretense about it—that I am a city boy. I've lived in this city my entire life. I admired what she had to say, especially about the town of Caledon and its five-point plan. I think that that is something that is divorced from many people who go to the supermarket and simply buy their food in cellophane containers, whether or not it's produced locally; it looks okay to them and they buy it. But when you have a five-point plan, as the member from Caledon outlined, where you start to look at the real necessity of feeding yourself, of having healthy foods, of transmitting that to your children, of having a sustainable economy, of having people work, and how it's all integrated into the community—I'd like to take my hat off to her for bringing that up, but more so to the town of Caledon for coming up with that plan that is taught, that is part of the school curriculum, that is part of everyday people's lives, and for sharing that I thank her, and I look forward to your comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. That concludes our questions and comments, and we return to the member for Dufferin—Caledon.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thank you, Speaker. To the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane, I really liked your "let's put some meat on the bones" for this legislation. It's pretty thin gruel right now, and I think that through amendments—well, I know through amendments, if they are adopted, accepted, that we can do a much better job of actually having a substantive Local Food Act.

To the Minister of the Environment, I trust that you will be supporting my private member's bill that I introduced yesterday that actually will enforce the use of recycled aggregate so that we can stop the constant need for only virgin product.

Prince Edward—Hastings, Beaches—East York, thank you for your comments. They are appreciated.



I'm looking forward, in less than a month, to starting to eat seasonally, eating locally, with the possible exception of squash season—sorry, squash producers. My children, on the other hand, last year, the memorable line as we were going through many, many meals of asparagus, finally said, “When does asparagus season end?” So even they understand that as a family, we eat locally and we eat in season and, like I say, with the exception of squash and asparagus, we are very happy to do it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I had not actually intended to speak today, but I have been listening to people talk about this bill and talk about the necessity of healthy food to the point that I felt compelled to actually stand up and say something on this act.

You know, as I said in my last two-minute hit, I am a city boy. I grew up not four kilometres from this very building in a place called Regent Park. We grew up in a whole group of apartment buildings. There was very little green space other than the baseball diamond where we went to play baseball. That's where I call home.

I remember learning about agriculture. You may find this strange, but I remember learning about agriculture in public school. We were taught all kinds of things in our science class, which I still remember to this very day. At the time, I thought it was kind of strange that I had to know the difference between a Holstein and a Guernsey cow by the look of them, where you look at an Angus cow versus some other kind of beef cow. We were told about Clydesdale and Percheron horses versus thoroughbred horses. We had to pick out pictures of how they looked different. We were told about agricultural products that were produced in Ontario, how and where they were grown, the type of soil that they had to come from. We were constantly amazed that you grew tobacco in the sandy soil around Delhi, Ontario. All of that was done in the school system in Regent Park, in Cabbagetown, in the centre of downtown Toronto.

That is really what I knew about agriculture, other than the one year they put us all on a bus and took us down to the Royal Winter Fair, where I actually saw up close, for the first time in my entire life, a goat and some sheep and some cows and some horses and actually smelled them. It was kind of a unique experience for a boy from Regent Park, because although I had seen some of those things on farms in close proximity to Toronto in those days—and remember, when I grew up as a boy, most of Scarborough was still farms. You didn't have to go very far from where I grew up, maybe only a few kilometres east into Scarborough, to see whole farms under production with animals. Of course, there were fences around and you couldn't go inside, and hence my discovery at the Royal Winter Fair.

But that's where I grew up. I despair sometimes when I talk to young people today that they don't have that kind of education in the school, because I think it's an important education. It's an important education for city kids to understand where their food comes from, who

produces the food, why it's important to have that food produced in local proximity, what you're going to eat. The whole nature of our society has changed quite a bit from the time when we were primarily an agricultural community until that point that we are primarily today, of course, an urban community here in Canada.

1720

When my colleague the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton finished speaking, I was surprised, because I did work in the immigration department, to find out he comes from a family of Jats. Now, “Jat” is a word in Punjabi, which confers to a group of farming communities from the Punjab. We had quite a conversation about that.

But be that as it may, I hope in my time as a politician over many years to have done something to help the farming communities. I think that this bill is an attempt to help them some more. I just want them to know that even a city boy needs to understand where the food comes from and the importance of a community to be self-sufficient.

Many countries around the world which are not self-sufficient in food find themselves eventually in bad circumstances. As countries go away from self-sufficiency in food, they find that they have to import it. They find that if the crops or something goes bad, they have to import huge amounts of food, often to their own detriment because they don't have that kind of money.

It's important that we continue, in the face of declining amounts of farmland because of development, to produce that food, and to make sure that the people who live here understand the importance of producing your own food so that in the event that something catastrophic ever happened, we would be self-sufficient and there wouldn't be mass starvation. You can imagine if there was a drought throughout the United States, from where we often import much of our food, as there was last year, but let's say there was a Dirty Thirties dust bowl, and those things that we have come to rely upon from California and from Arizona, those fresh fruits and vegetables in the wintertime, were suddenly not there. We'd better make sure we have that kind of food ourselves.

As a city boy, as a politician, I've endeavoured to do a number of things over my years. One of them was to set up the first farmers' market in East York. It's still going strong, and I'm very proud that we bring those farmers. They come every Tuesday for about six or seven months of the year. The same farmers that I organized to come on the very first day, now some maybe 15 or 18 years ago, are still coming today. There are lineups of people, and the appreciation of the people who live there to get those fresh fruits and vegetables right off the farm is enormous. Everything from people who sell cured meats to a woman named Hattie who makes wonderful jam, to all of the vegetables that come in in season, is there. The city people enjoy shopping there.

Most recently, and I had nothing to do with it, but in my riding, on the Danforth at West Lynn, there is a

wonderful farmers' market that is one day a week as well. The people line up. They bring their shopping carts, they bring their wagons, and they bring their kids. They talk to the farmers. There is a whole sense in our communities of tying oneself back into the land, of learning about the new vegetables, of buying those heirloom tomatoes. They look kind of strange, and all you see is the big, globular red ones in the supermarket, and you see some of these other ones with different colours. But when you taste, when you bite into them, you can certainly tell that it was worth it. Even though they may cost a little bit more, the taste is phenomenal.

The same is true about the homegrown garlic. I know; I've seen it in the supermarket. You can buy a sleeve of made-in-China garlic for a buck for four of them, big, big suckers. But if you buy one from a farmer in Ontario, you're going to get one that you truly are going to enjoy because the taste is phenomenal. It is grown locally. It is there. When you put that in your food, you can feel good about knowing how it was grown, where it was grown, that there's no improper chemicals.

I've also been involved in putting together market gardens in my riding, as a mayor, as a councillor and most recently, a little bit, as an MPP. We have them in a great number of places, including land that would otherwise just be fallow, where the wires go across—the hydro wires. Underneath those, we have market gardens, with people growing all kinds of wonderful food. We have them in some of the community apartment buildings which are rent-gear-to-income to teach people who are living with modest means how to grow their own fruits and vegetables and to live off those, how to can them and preserve them or freeze them in some cases to use them over the wintertime.

It's wonderful to watch their children, who really had no idea, actually see those plants grow and nurture them and water them and occasionally fight off the raccoons who come around to eat them, because that's one of them—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yes, the raccoons want some of that, too. It shows them some of the things the farmers have to do in order to protect their crops from wildlife.

It also teaches many of them how to grow those fruits and vegetables without pesticides, and I think this is a very important thing because you actually know the kind of food that you have produced and what went into producing it. You know that it doesn't have chemicals that could cause injury to you. You know that what you're eating, although it may have a blemish or two on it, is actually probably far healthier to you than that great big produce that you can see in the supermarket without blemish or mark.

Last but not least, it has been my honour over time to work with the food banks. As the member from Sarnia-Lambton had to say, we need to start helping the farmers to get some kind of a tax writeoff not to plow the food back into the ground. There are literally hundreds of thousands of people here who rely on food banks. If we

can give them even some fresh fruit and vegetables that would otherwise be wasted, it is an absolutely important thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to conclude, as a city boy: Thank you to the farmers. Thank you for feeding us. Thank you for doing everything you can for the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to be given an opportunity to speak in support of Bill 36. I'm also pleased to be able to follow my colleague from Toronto beach, because as urban members of this House, we know and we appreciate locally grown food because we know and have been, as a former mayor of East York—I recognize his work in our community in terms of local school community gardens and local food for our students, like he talked about the food bank.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to focus my short time about one of the purposes of the bill, which is clearly laid out: "to increase awareness of local food in Ontario, including the diversity of local food." I know, as a former school board trustee, the importance of diversity in our schools. Many of my schools are now starting to create what they call school community gardens. Working with a local agency in my riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, one of the agencies, called CICS, is starting to build a community garden attached to this community centre. At the same time, they got funding recently from Trillium to create a community kitchen. The continued support of the kitchen through a community garden is the right thing to do.

The proposed legislation, Mr. Speaker, will provide that opportunity, the seamless growing of food from the community into the kitchen and onto the dining room table, and that's the right thing to do. Our government to date has invested over \$160 million to support local food since 2003. One of the areas they focused on in the last couple of years is the school nutrition program. I know I have spent a lot of time, as a former school board trustee, supporting the school-based nutrition program, because it is the right thing to do. Recently I visited one of my schools, Silver Springs Public School; they have a community kitchen there to support the school program. At the end of the day, the kids know that eating healthy improves learning, Mr. Speaker. This bill will address this issue.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Valuable comments from the member for Beaches-East York, and I followed with interest some of his work in helping to develop a farmers' market in a highly urbanized area. The member and I sat together on the finance committee for many, many years. The member made no bones about his urban background but also his interest in agriculture and food production and consumption and marketing. We would get a diversity of presentations before the finance committee, and I did appreciate the member's interest in agribusiness.



1730

With reference to Bill 36, it attempts to address government procurement, and that's well worth pursuing and something that we also stand for. But I'm disappointed: no mention of agricultural education—or food education, for that matter. I used to teach agriculture at the high school level. There was a home economics department in the high school at that time. I found that many of my students weren't on farms, but they had the interest. In fact, in the years that I taught, it was optional and the student body grew considerably. They had that interest in agriculture. Many of them have gone on to be the best farmers in our riding. Many who did not own farms or were not directly involved in agriculture and ended up even, say, pumping gas, diesel, distributing fuel oil—they're talking to farmers all the time. Through our high school, they had a four-year course in agriculture and were able to communicate with their customers, regardless of whatever trade they were in or business they were in.

There are challenges that remain in agriculture—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thanks very much.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, it's good to see that the member opposite has such enthusiasm that he didn't even notice the clock had run out and he continued to talk. It actually shows in the chamber how passionate people are about food. Listening to the member from Beaches–East York, I could hear the joy in his voice, how he spoke about his young childhood and his trip to the farm, through school. I also want to congratulate the member for being part of setting up the first farmers' market in his area. He certainly has contributed positively as a member overall, in his years in politics, to his riding. He continues to do so here in the chamber.

He also talked about how education is important—and I've mentioned this before, that we have to promote local food, growing local food. We have to promote the occupation of farming as a viable option and choice for children. I think part of doing that is not just in the high schools, but let's start in the public schools. There have been suggestions that public schools have a garden in the schoolyard. Let children learn as they grow their food, as opposed to waiting till high school. Start them young, let them understand where food comes from and how to grow a bean and a cucumber and a tomato plant, so that when they do have high school come, they're already familiar with the process. That could be an option that they seriously look at. If we don't continue the legacy of farmers, we're not going to be here talking about local food very much longer in this chamber.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I'm pleased to have an opportunity to respond to the comments of the member from Beaches–East York. I'm excited by this piece of

legislation. I think it's absolutely timely and important, and I'm happy that we brought it forward, so much so that I actually tried and lobbied very hard with our whip's office to try and get 20 minutes, but that Ryan Singh, the new guy in charge back there, blew me off. He's in the back row there. Not only didn't he give me 20; he didn't even give me 10. So I've been left with about three or four or five two-minuters on it. I told Ryan I'd get him. Honest to God, it's the gospel truth: Ryan just didn't come through for me on this particular one. So I've got these two-minuters, and I've already used 30 seconds of my first two-minuter.

Speaker, I said yesterday that I grew up in a time, when I was in Port Arthur, where everybody, it seemed, had a garden. It certainly seemed like that. They blanched it; they canned it; they preserved it; they cooked it; they stretched it out. It seemed like it was there, and it lasted forever. It was healthy; it was nutritious; it was local; it was safe—all those things. We did it as a matter of course. It seems to me a little bit unfortunate that somehow we have to bring back legislation today to encourage people to go back to where we were so naturally 20, 30, 40 years ago. I'm not sure what changed. I have some ideas; if I had an hour, I could talk to you about those. But here we are with legislation that I think is timely and important. We need to encourage it again.

I'm very happy that contained in the legislation is a piece where we're going to work with provincial entities like hospitals, like long-term-care homes, like school boards, to encourage them to engage in local procurement up to \$25,000, where we can show a more tangible benefit to our local agricultural community.

As I said yesterday when I spoke about this out in Oliver Paipoonge, in Neebing, in Conmee, in Gillies, in O'Connor, I've got a huge agricultural community in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan. They do great work. They all work under the umbrella of the Thunder Bay Federation of Agriculture—a tremendous job. I hope they're as excited by this legislation as I am, Speaker, and I thank you for my two minutes.

**Interjection:** Give him another two.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I'd love it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Someone has to seek unanimous consent.

I return to the member for Beaches–East York for his reply.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

To the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan, I think they should give you much more than two minutes. I just want to tell you that I wasn't supposed to speak at all today, but I seized this opportunity to stand up, as you can next, because all that's happening is that nobody's standing up for rotation. I would suggest you do what I did and just stand up, because if you have something to say about Thunder Bay–Atikokan and the farmers there, I think it should be on the record. So I'm asking you to please do that, just as I just did.

But to the others: To the member for Scarborough—Agincourt, I thank her. Haldimand—Norfolk and London—Fanshawe both talked about the need for education in the schools. I think it's a fundamental need, especially for city kids. I gave my own experience, and I will grant you, that was more than 50 years ago when I first experienced farm life at the Royal Winter Fair. That was my first experience until the time that I was nearly—I was in my fifties when I actually spent my first night on a farm. And that's the life of many city kids.

I think it's absolutely important that they get to understand what farm life is, what farming communities are, to wake up in the morning to the peace and the quiet—and the hard work that is involved and the danger that many farmers encounter. Because it is one of the most dangerous jobs in all of Canada; more dangerous than construction, more dangerous than police work or fire work is to work on a farm. It is no surprise that many of them are hurt over the course of their lifetime. We owe a great deal of gratitude to them for doing those hard jobs, for working with the land in order to make sure that we are self-sufficient.

So again, I would just like to close by thanking the farmers. I wish I knew more, but I have tried my whole life as a city person to understand, to appreciate and to say thank you for what they do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** The member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan certainly has our blessing to speak for a 10-minute rotation. His own government is holding him back from speaking for a 10-minute rotation.

But I'm pleased to stand here today to speak to Bill 36, the Local Food Act. A Local Food Act should be, and could be, a good chance to help our world-class Ontario agriculture and food processors. But despite their amazing products, our local Ontario food producers and farmers have been facing some real challenges in recent years. Farmers and food producers are looking to us for effective legislation that addresses those challenges and creates the climate and opportunities for even greater success.

My riding of Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock is heavily dependent on a successful food industry. As a result, people in my riding know a thing or two about food and farming. Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock is a regional centre for farm marketing, farm supply, dairy supply, grain elevators, livestock sale, farm machinery—and the list goes on and on. We've got the biggest community pasture in Ontario, and Kawartha Lakes alone is home to 1,500 farms and has the largest number of beef cattle in central Ontario. We've also got some of the most successful local food producers in the province.

I'm going to mention something that will bring pleasant memories to most people in this Legislature, and that is Kawartha Dairy ice cream. Kawartha Dairy's head office is located in downtown Bobcaygeon, and it ships delicious ice cream all over the province. I'm sure many members of the House—I could ask for their hands to be

put up, but I'm sure they've all tasted Kawartha Dairy ice cream. This year will mark 76 years since Jack and Ila Crowe bought a small dairy in Bobcaygeon and went into the dairy business, and I am proud to say I knew them both personally. At that time, they cooled their milk using ice from the lake and delivered it by wagon and boat in the summer and by sleigh in the winter.

**1740**

In the mid-1950s, Kawartha Dairy took the fateful decision to start making ice cream, a decision for which I think we're all very grateful. From their humble beginnings in Bobcaygeon, they've grown to eight retail stores as well as selling to a wide variety of wholesale customers, even in Toronto. You can buy Kawartha Dairy ice cream a couple of blocks from here. From retail outlets to food service establishments and, of course, the ice cream parlours that I mentioned—and the lineups at Minden and Highway 35 in the summertime are akin to what you'd see at Disney World.

Demonstrating just how leading-edge our Ontario businesses can be, the company now provides custom production services to other food companies, using the expertise that they developed over all those years to produce ice cream, juice and other dairy products. All the milk used by Kawartha Dairy is delivered daily from Ontario farms, supporting our local agriculture, and I would say the majority is from the riding of Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock.

Another hugely successful food operation in my riding is Mariposa Dairy, and it has grown from a small goat herd in 1987 to a large goat farm and cheese-packing plant, creating employment and stimulating the local economy, and I know that they have sent this technology worldwide. Many who have tried their products say it's the best goat cheese that they've ever tasted. International experts agree, as their product has won numerous international awards at industry conferences throughout North America.

Bruce and Sharon VandenBerg and their employees at Mariposa are not content to be followers in their industry. They have developed and introduced technology innovations that have vastly improved the efficiency of their operations, winning them a Leaders in Innovation Award from the province. You can buy their cheese under the Celebrity brand in the grocery stores, and they even have chocolate goat cheese, just to give you a hint. They are but one example of the potential of the Ontario food sector.

Another is Pickseed, which is a world-class seed production facility. This company has had a successful track record going back to 1947 and operates throughout Canada and the United States.

We are an exporter in Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock of dairy live, as well as genetics, beef and goats, and most people are shocked that that occurs, but we do export live and have for many, many decades.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Yes, Lloyd Wicks is there—I mentioned him earlier—the member for Haldimand—Norfolk is saying.



My riding has also seen the development of the Kawartha Lakes Food Coalition, which has evolved from Kawartha Choice FarmFresh, which is a partnership of farmers, producers and retailers which promotes local food choice and consumption in the greater Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes. Of course, we have our Haliburton county farmers' markets. Brock township, in my riding, is a big agriculture producer too, and of course we have many, many fairs, which are too long to list, but I invite you to attend them all and will send you notices if you need them.

These local success stories in my riding illustrate the entrepreneurship, innovation and quality which we see every day in Ontario's agriculture and food production sectors—all positive stuff, but I have to say that this bill we're discussing today does nothing to really help our farmers. I mentioned that a Local Food Act could be a great help to farmers and food producers in the riding, but as several people have pointed out, this bill as it now stands just doesn't go far enough.

#### *Interjections.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** It's okay. Ice cream will be supplied later in the west lobby.

Increasing government procurement of Ontario food is all well and good—nobody is against that—but farmers and farm processors were looking for a little bit more specific and profound and concrete action.

#### *Interjections.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** We've got amendments for you; don't worry. We'll be sending those ideas over to you.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** With the ice cream. Amendments and ice cream: They go together.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** With ice cream, if that makes it slide down better.

Several key stakeholders—the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association and others—have expressed their disappointment and believe that this bill should go further than promoting awareness and improving procurement.

It's lacking ambition, I have to say, but the bill does have other flaws too. Replacing Ontario Agriculture Week is a clear mistake. It has been mentioned several times that Bert Johnson had brought in Agriculture Week before. We certainly don't want to see that gone or disbanded.

The measures missing from this bill are exactly the type of ideas we have suggested in our food and rural affairs white paper, *Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario*. We need to create a regional food terminal, either in the east or the west—whatever is brought forth in discussions. We need to implement a one-window access to government for farmers and agribusiness. There needs to be a dedicated fund for the Risk Management Program, for concrete proposals that will help food processors and agribusiness and support our Ontario food system.

These ideas all came from listening to stakeholders in the sector, like our critic, the member from Oxford, did. He went around and asked them, and the government

could too; or we're willing to share those ideas, as been put out to the public in our white paper. But their absence from the bill is a little disappointing. We gave them lots of time. They had some time off. We gave them lots of ideas and time to put it in, in the bill that they introduce now that we're debating.

But this bill is a limited and unimpressive piece of legislation, and we need to do more to support our agriculture industry. It's much less than we were expecting, as I said, and it's much less than what the industry deserves.

So we need bold, innovative ideas to support our farmers, and the Liberal government has brought in policies and regulations that are actually hurting farmers. Ontario's food system and agriculture sector is facing a number of challenges that cry out to be addressed. This isn't a new topic to the Legislature, but red tape, could we talk about that some more?

Farmers have told us that government regulation and paperwork is a huge barrier to getting their work done and achieving greater success. I have billboards in lots of my agriculture stores throughout the riding that have just tons of permits—over-permitted to death. They need to be streamlined, and 77% of the farmers who were surveyed last year said that red tape was increasing. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture and CFIB are saying the same thing.

Farmers have been negatively impacted by the arbitrary administration of the Endangered Species Act, which fails to consider the socio-economic factors associated with decisions and action plans. There's lots of record of me speaking on that topic in the Legislature.

But how are farmers supposed to engage in the kind of innovation that has made Ontario agriculture the best in the world when they have to spend all their time on paperwork? The number one thing I hear in the riding, no question, is about the red tape and regulation. Outdated, questionable regulations push small-scale food operations like abattoirs right out of business. I don't think there's a rural riding represented here that doesn't have abattoirs that have closed down. There's nothing that deals with that pressing issue.

And farmers, like many Ontarians, also suffer from the spiraling costs in hydro. The government's record of these inflated subsidies for power obtained through industrial wind turbines, solar panels—they've driven up the cost of electricity for not just businesses and farmers, but individual people. That drives them out of business, because they can't afford to do business in the province of Ontario. They don't have that extra money in their pocket.

So the member from Oxford and the party have put forward some concrete proposals in our rural white paper. We're willing to share them with the government opposite, and we're willing to debate this bill for as long as we can debate it here in the Legislature and take it to committee and make lots of amendments and improvements that are actually going to help the farmers of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to speak on the Local Food Act, and to comment on some of the remarks by the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. Although we usually spend time talking about our own riding a lot of times, I would like to salute Kawartha Dairy. Kawartha Dairy has fantastic ice cream. And for the folks in this House and the folks at home, do you know why Kawartha Dairy's ice cream tastes as good as it does? Because it's made from milk. If you go to your local supermarket or go to the frozen foods section, there will be ice cream, and then there's stuff that looks like ice cream.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** What's it made out of?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Not milk. I always take fits if I see it in somebody's house. It's frozen dessert, but it looks like ice cream. Look at the packaging. It looks suspiciously like ice cream, and the deluxe stuff that's got, like, little pieces of chocolate bar or maybe chocolate bar, and that is supposed to be the crème de la crème. You pay big bucks for that, but it doesn't have milk in it. And that's one of the things that we should educate people on. On this side, we have no problem with people buying frozen dessert, but they should know that they're buying frozen dessert. That should be a big piece of any type of legislation, to actually demonstrate to people the difference between ice cream and frozen dessert or between milk and dairy beverage. It sounds the same, almost, but it isn't quite the same.

1750

Thank you for that opportunity, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I just have to say how much I'm enjoying the debate on this bill. It's wonderful to hear members talk about the good food that's growing in their own communities. I just wanted to stand up and talk about some things that are happening in London.

There's a young man named Andrew Fleet. He started an organization called Growing Chefs! We've heard a lot about the importance of education. What Growing Chefs! does is it goes into the schools and works with young kids, where they understand what's in season, and they chop the vegetables and make the salad and cook the soup, and then they have a feast and learn about local food. It's a wonderful program. I've had the pleasure of participating in some of his classes, and it's just a really good example of what we can do in our schools to teach kids that healthy, local food can be great-tasting food.

I also wanted to talk about the London employment centre. I had a meeting with David Corke, who runs the London employment centre, last week. In fact, he brought me some samples of shortbread cookies and sourdough bread that his students had made earlier that day. They help people who are out of work learn the food industry. They get their food handling certificate, they learn how to cook, and he places them in jobs. In fact, he's got a wonderful success rate. He said, "I've got two

pieces of advice. One of them: The Local Food Act is fantastic. You make sure it passes." David, I heard you and I'm doing my best.

There's one more that I have time for that I wanted to talk about, and that's the Western Fair market. The Western Fair market started just a few years ago, and it has become such an incubator for great local food. I'm sure my colleague from London-Fanshawe has been there many times. Businesses that are getting their start at the Western Fair market, where they sell wonderful local food, are going on and expanding their business. They're spilling out onto Dundas Street and Old East. We've got a wonderful new bakery there, Artisan Bakery. It got its start at the market; now it's a full-fledged bakery, open every day, on Dundas Street.

I'm out of time, but there's more to talk about.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I'm proud to get up to comment on our expert on this side, our colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. She always has an interesting story to tell about her riding and really about the success of the large agriculture sector. Of course, everybody knows Kawartha Lakes ice cream. I think I have to agree with the member from the third party when he talks about using real milk and real cream. That's starting to become hard to find in this province. It's hard to find, from the packaging, just what is real milk.

But the innovations in agriculture right across this province, in genetics, in techniques—we're just seeing a lot of changes over the years since I've been involved in agriculture, that's for sure. A lot of it has come from the local farmers, their ingenuity, the local fairs and the idea of getting together and looking for improvements.

I'll talk just briefly about neighbours of mine, the Vogel family. They're a large operation in beef, venison, milk, soybeans, corn, maple syrup, grain drying, trucking, excavation equipment and sawmilling—a small family of two boys and their father, Tony, who work very hard—long hours. Actually, they make you feel lazy being next door because they get up early in the morning and at 10 o'clock at night in the summer they're still working at it.

I go over and have a chance to talk to them, and they talk about some of the issues. Imagine, with an operation like that, the red tape that's in front of them. It takes them away from doing their work in the fields. With the price of hydro, it's just very hard. If they were half a mile down the road, they would actually get their power from Cornwall Electric, and it would be much cheaper because they get their power from Quebec.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently to the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, as I always try to do, because she is a voice of reason from that particular area of the province.

I just want to tell you my own Kawartha Lakes story, my own Kawartha Dairy story. They have quite a modern



store just outside of Bancroft. My parents, for many years before they died, lived in and around Bancroft. It was always a treat and a pleasure, on the way to see my parents, to stop at that store to buy ice cream. As well, on my way home to Toronto, I would often buy my milk there, not only because it was fresher; it was about the same price, and you knew exactly what was in it. I liked to give my money to a small independent group of people who were producing on the land, and I'd like to think that it was in keeping with the spirit of what we should all be doing: buying local.

Although I acknowledge that much of the milk that I buy in the supermarket probably comes from somewhere in Ontario, I know, as well, that with the huge dairy farms and things from Quebec, it could come from there, or it could come from anywhere—nothing against that, but I always try to buy local.

To the people who started Kawartha Dairy and the people who continue to work there, good for you.

I just wanted to say a few words, too, about her riding. The last couple of days have seen some pretty disastrous flooding, and I think that may be affecting or may potentially affect some of the farmers and farming communities in and around Kawartha Lakes-Brock. I know that the York River has overflowed in Bancroft and in other parts. There's some serious flooding in and around the Peterborough-Lindsay area. Hang tough. I'm sure everything will be all right.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments.

I go back to the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** See, everybody did know what Kawartha Dairy ice cream takes like. I must put in a plug: Their milkshakes are the best, in 100-and-some different flavours. It's unbelievably good.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Yes, we'll just bring the truck down.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Oh, yes, they can come again.

To the community spirit of Kawartha Dairy, I'm sure they're handing out ice cream or doing whatever they can to help the victims of the floods that are happening certainly in the Minden area, because that's the type of people that they are.

We've got a lot of amendments, I think, that have come out of what I have said and what other members have said about this food bill that we're discussing today, to make it better. We all want to see the success stories continue and flourish in our agriculture sector. We'd like to see concrete targets, which aren't in this piece of legislation. We'd like to see them brought forward, because fluffy language and vague aspirations don't help our food industry, our farmers on the land.

I'm hoping that the food and agri-business sector does come to committee and does present the arguments themselves. I'm sure they will because—you don't have to take my word for it, although I am telling you the

truth—they are being hindered in the province of Ontario, as we speak, by provincial rules and regulations that are mostly outdated, that need to be modernized.

Let me tell you, the farmers are actually more advanced in the province of Ontario than the government's rules and regulations are. We need to have that symbiotic relationship with them.

I'd like to have seen some changes—and maybe they even will—in the tire taxes that have come down and hurt the agriculture industry. I'm looking at the Minister of the Environment: The ball is in your court. We'd certainly give you ideas, and I know our environment critic has done that.

The horse racing industry, which has been dealt a lethal blow—if something could be done for that world-class industry that we did have and is now in jeopardy in the province of Ontario.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the short time today I've had to speak on a large topic. I look forward to further debate.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

### POWER PLANTS

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Prince Edward-Hastings has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given on Monday by the Minister of Energy. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the minister or the minister's parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

I recognize the member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

**1800**

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be here and have five minutes to talk about the lack of an energy policy that exists with this current Liberal government in Ontario.

I'm going to give you some examples as to the lack of planning that has been occurring for the last 10 years when it comes to the energy file here in Ontario. Yesterday, we asked the Premier a couple of questions—many questions—about the cost of cancelling the Oakville power plant. She continues to stick with the fact that, in her estimation, it's going to cost \$40 million to cancel the Oakville power plant, when we all know—everybody in this House, including the Premier, knows—that it's going to cost far, far more than that.

If you take the numbers that came out of the Mississauga power plant, the Auditor General's report and the cancellation that occurred there, the number was \$180 million all along. The government was saying it was going to cost \$180 million to cancel Mississauga. The

Auditor General reported last Monday that it was actually going to cost \$275 million, so 45% more, as a matter of fact, to move the project from Mississauga to the Sarnia area. And we know that that was the cheap one.

The expensive one is the Oakville power plant, yet they're clinging to this \$40-million number. If you use the same formula that the Auditor General used to cancel the Mississauga plant and move it to Sarnia, that number should be in the area of anywhere from \$800 million to \$991 million, according to the formula that was used by the Auditor General.

What they're doing is they're moving the Oakville power plant, which was cancelled in 2010, and they're taking it all the way from Oakville—and we know where Oakville is; it's southwest of the GTA—and taking it all the way to eastern Ontario, just across from Prince Edward county, where the Lennox generating station is, which is currently using a gas and oil mix. It operates about 1.8% of the time; it doesn't operate very much at all. It's a rather large facility. What they're doing is they're taking the Oakville plant and they're putting it right beside this existing power plant at Lennox in the community of Bath. It's a stone's throw away. They're building a brand new power plant—gas-fired—in Bath, which is right next door to the Lennox one, which hardly ever operates.

What they're also going to have to do as a result of putting this brand new power plant in that area—which is, again, just east of my riding of Prince Edward-Hastings—is, they're going to have to create the transmission to get it to where the power is needed, which is in the greater Toronto area.

At the same time that they're doing this—they've made this decision to move this power plant from Oakville all the way out to eastern Ontario—they're still forcing wind turbine projects on an unwilling host community in Prince Edward county. These people in Prince Edward county have done absolutely everything that they can to get the message through to this current Premier and the former Premier that they're not a willing host community. The council has done everything it could possibly do. Community activists who want to keep industrial wind turbines out of the county have done everything they could possibly do. They've written to the Premiers; they've written to the Minister of Energy; they've written to the Minister of Environment; they've gone through the environmental tribunal process. But the government refuses to listen.

Why are we putting these little wind turbines up in southern Prince Edward county—and I don't mean they're little as in their stature; they're huge. But they provide a minimal amount of electricity compared to these giant power plants that are going to be sitting side by side just east of there and across the water. It makes absolutely no sense at all that they're forging ahead, forcing these on a community.

The most ironic part about it is that Oakville was listened to because they had a Liberal seat in that riding, right? They had a Liberal seat in Oakville. They listened

to the fact that Oakville didn't want that power plant. Why are they not listening to Prince Edward county? Why are they not listening to the residents of Prince Edward county? They're forcing wind turbines on them when now we're getting a power plant, at God knows how much money—anywhere from \$800 million to \$991 million, possibly. This entire scandal is going to cost us potentially a billion dollars. The worst part about it is that all they have to do is listen to the people of Prince Edward county. Thank you for your time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy, the member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, our government's commitment has been to be open and transparent. That's why our government broadened the mandate of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, and that's why our government asked the Auditor General to report on the relocation of the Oakville plant. The Premier has agreed to appear before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, if asked. And while that work is ongoing, we've asked the Ontario Power Authority to provide an estimate to the committee of their updated numbers as soon as possible.

Now, you would think that the party opposite, the PCs, would actually want that to happen, but of course the Progressive Conservative Party voted against having the Ontario Power Authority come in as soon as tomorrow. So here's a point to ponder: The Conservatives don't want the numbers that they've asked for so that they can continue to complain about the fact that they don't have the numbers.

The Auditor General, however, has already reported on the Mississauga relocation. We thank him for his report. We accept his findings. The Auditor General will conduct another independent objective report on the Oakville plant, because it's important for Ontarians to have a full understanding of that relocation as well. But to be clear, the full contract—the full contract—for the relocated Lennox facility is a public document, and it has been since last year. Any notion that anything is being hidden is rubbish.

It's time to move forward now. It's time to ensure that we get energy infrastructure and the process around siting it done properly from the beginning.

We accept that this matter could have been handled differently from the start, and it could have been handled better. The Premier has said that. The minister has said that. Ontarians know that all three parties promised to relocate the Oakville gas plant—all three parties.

Because the PCs and the NDP made the same commitment, it's now incumbent on all three parties to work together to improve the siting of future energy projects, and also it's incumbent on the PCs and the NDP to provide the basis for the policy decisions they made in 2011. Give the justice committee your numbers. Give the justice committee your plans. Give the justice committee your justification for making your commitment to say that, as PCs and as NDPers, you too would have moved both plants, because candidates from both parties stood



up and said clearly, "We will move both plants." It was in their literature; it was in their robocalls.

So everybody here agrees that no matter who had formed government in October 2011, there was going to be a cost for it, and the new government—in this case, the government of the party I represent—took an honest and transparent approach and negotiated the best deal possible. That's what's important here, and that's what we need to focus on. We have to make sure that we have a better process in the future.

We've come a long way in the last 10 years. This province inherited a system from the Progressive Conservatives that was broken and neglected. While they were buying energy at upwards of \$2-plus per kilowatt hour, they were selling it back to you for 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour and putting a billion dollars on your stranded hydro debt.

But since then, we've built a clean, modern and reliable system that Ontarians know they can count on, and the energy sector is constantly evolving, especially as energy consumption habits and economic conditions

change. So too, our long-term energy plan must also evolve. That's why Minister Chiarelli announced last week that Ontario will conduct a formal review of the long-term energy plan to be complete within six months. The review is going to be based on a strong and transparent consultation process with the public, with municipalities and with the energy sector. Our Ministry of Energy is particularly interested in reviewing our supply mix, how conservation can play a larger role, and how we can create a more predictable and stable clean energy procurement process.

We look forward to recommendations from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, and we look forward to ideas on how to improve Ontario's siting process for energy generation facilities. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried and this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1810.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craiton, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Millroy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakubski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margaret R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











*Continued from back cover*

<b>Sustainable Waterloo Region</b>	
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	1436
<b>Firearms control</b>	
Mr. Mike Colle.....	1437
<b>Rosannagh MacLennan</b>	
Mr. Frank Klees .....	1437
<b>Peter Orphanos</b>	
Mr. Bob Delaney.....	1437
<b>London Lightning</b>	
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	1437
<b>Wearing of pins</b>	
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1438

# STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

<b>Cancer care</b>	
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1438
<b>National Victims of Crime Awareness Week</b>	
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1439
<b>Cancer care</b>	
Mr. Bill Walker.....	1440
<b>National Victims of Crime Awareness Week</b>	
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	1440
<b>Cancer care</b>	
Mme France Gélinas .....	1440
<b>National Victims of Crime Awareness Week</b>	
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1441
<b>Notice of dissatisfaction</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1441
<b>Private members' public business</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1441

# PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

<b>Health care funding</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1441
<b>Hydro rates</b>	
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1442
<b>Electoral boundaries</b>	
Ms. Soo Wong.....	1442
<b>Hospital parking fees</b>	
Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	1442
<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1442
<b>Ontario College of Trades</b>	
Mr. Randy Pettapiece.....	1443

# Environmental research

Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1443
<b>Ontario College of Trades</b>	
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1443
<b>Wind turbines</b>	
Ms. Laurie Scott.....	1443
<b>Mining industry</b>	
Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1444
<b>Ontario College of Trades</b>	
Mr. Rob E. Milligan .....	1444
<b>Dog ownership</b>	
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1444

# ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

# Local Food Act, 2013, Bill 36, Ms. Wynne / Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux, projet de loi 36, Mme Wynne

Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1445
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	1446
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	1447
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1447
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1447
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1448

# Royal assent / Sanction royale

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro) .....	1448
---	------

# Local Food Act, 2013, Bill 36, Ms. Wynne / Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux, projet de loi 36, Mme Wynne

Mr. Robert Bailey.....	1448
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1450
Mr. Grant Crack .....	1450
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	1450
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1451
Mr. Robert Bailey.....	1451
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1451
Hon. Mario Sergio.....	1453
Ms. Laurie Scott.....	1453
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1454
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1454
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1454
Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	1455
Mr. John Vanthof .....	1456
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	1456
Mr. Todd Smith.....	1457
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1457
Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	1457
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1458
Ms. Soo Wong.....	1459
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	1459

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	1460
Mr. Bill Mauro.....	1460
Mr. Michael Prue.....	1460
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	1461
Mr. John Vanthof.....	1463
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	1463
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	1463
Mr. Michael Prue.....	1463
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	1464
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	1464

#### **ADJOURNMENT DEBATE / DÉBAT SUR LA MOTION D'AJOURNEMENT**

##### **Power plants**

Mr. Todd Smith .....	1464
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1465



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 23 April 2013 / Mardi 23 avril 2013

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013, Bill 55, Ms. MacCharles / Loi de 2013 renforçant la protection du consommateur ontarien, projet de loi 55, Mme MacCharles

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1415
Mr. Vic Dhillon .....	1419
Mr. Jim McDonnell .....	1422
Mr. Rosario Marchese .....	1422
Ms. Soo Wong .....	1423
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1423
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1423
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1424

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Miss Monique Taylor .....	1424
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	1424
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1424
Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield .....	1424
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1424
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1424
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	1424

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Taxation

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1424
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1424

### Government spending

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1425
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1426

### Home care

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1427
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1427

### Home care

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1427
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1428

### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1428
Hon. John Milloy .....	1428

### Power plants

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1429
Hon. John Milloy .....	1429

## International trade

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1429
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	1430

## Power plants

Mr. Steve Clark .....	1430
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1430
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	1431

## Cancer treatment

Mme France Gélinas .....	1431
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1431

## Family caregiver leave

Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	1431
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	1431

## Power plants

Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1432
Hon. John Milloy .....	1432

## Aboriginal programs and services

Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1432
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1433

## Research and innovation

Ms. Soo Wong .....	1433
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	1433

## Power plants

Mr. Ted Chudleigh .....	1434
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1434

## Education funding

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1434
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	1434

## Visitors

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1435
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	1435

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Flooding

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	1435
------------------------	------

### Battle of Stoney Creek

Mr. Paul Miller .....	1435
-----------------------	------

### Toronto Maple Leafs

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1436
------------------------------	------

### Flooding

Mr. Norm Miller .....	1436
-----------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*



No. 30

N° 30

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 24 April 2013**

**Mercredi 24 avril 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller





### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 24 April 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 24 avril 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### WEARING OF PINS

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the minister.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear daffodil pins today in recognition of Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Month.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister has asked for unanimous consent to wear daffodil pins. Are we agreed? Agreed.

Orders of the day.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Good morning, Speaker and members. The government will not be calling order G36 but rather government order G14.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### NON-PROFIT HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 15, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 14, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I rise to participate in the debate about Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013, which is yet another bill that has been revived by the Liberals after their similar legislation, Bill 65, died with prorogation. While I'm

pleased to engage in this debate here today, it again comes with apprehension, as this bill would have been enacted into law by now if the Premier and the Liberal government hadn't decided to prorogue Parliament and put their party's interests ahead of what is best for Ontario. The Liberals can say this is an important bill to them, Mr. Speaker, but actions speak louder than words, and they've proven that it's not as important as, say, shuttering the Legislature for four months to avoid a contempt motion and find a new leader, a rather selfish act in the history of this province.

The fact of the matter, to us anyway, is that this is indeed an important issue that shouldn't have to be continually reintroduced, as there are 550 non-profit co-operatives in Ontario—many in my riding—that provide housing for over 125,000 Ontarians. It's an issue that, on a positive note, as we've seen from past debate, seemed to garner support from all three parties. It's a shame it has taken this long to go through the parliamentary process, but I'm certainly pleased that it's been reintroduced and am hopeful that it may soon become law.

Along with my colleagues, I'm generally supportive of this bill and its main intention to move co-operative tenure dispute cases from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board. This is where all other housing disputes are settled and, to me, makes sense.

There is one new aspect of the legislation that I'm concerned about, that I want to touch on in a few moments. But for now, let me explain why I believe this legislation is important. Similar to all other landlord and tenant disputes, the proposed provisions in this legislation are the same provisions that all other landlords in the province already have, and that we've agreed, are fair to evict a tenant. Such disputes might include: rent arrears, late payment of rent, wilful damage and illegal activity by tenants or interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of property and so on.

Second, the new provisions would also streamline the resolution process by allowing co-ops to apply directly to the board to terminate a former member's occupancy of a member unit and evict under a few straightforward circumstances. Such conditions might include, for instance, where the former member has terminated his or her membership and occupancy rights; where the former member's membership and occupancy rights have expired as of a predetermined date; and where the former member is a post-secondary student living in a student housing co-operative and has given notice of termination.

As I'm sure most would agree, these are all basic circumstances that, under our current system, would require



going to court and a great deal of time and money. This legislation would reduce the load of these cases and ease the burden on our court system that is not only costly but also clogs up the system.

This brings me to a third reason this legislation is important, and it has to do with legal costs incurred by co-op members each year. The average cost of resolving co-op disputes in court is somewhere between \$3,000 to \$5,000 per case, and with, on average, 300 cases heard each year, it puts court costs to co-op members upwards of \$1 million annually. It's a lot of money considering there is a more affordable option to settle these disputes, and it's money that, instead of wasting, we could be putting toward the housing system.

These are all benefits of Bill 14 and its predecessor Bill 65 that, looking to the past debate, seemed to garner support from all three parties, as I've said, which is certainly a feat, considering the Liberal government's history in this minority Legislature. Considering the past support for Bill 65, to ensure its swift resolution, you would think the government would keep its successor, Bill 14, the same in order to not rock the boat, as we say.

You would think that, Mr. Speaker, but that's not the case. Bill 14 contains an amendment clause that gives the Landlord and Tenant Board the power to waive a \$45 filing fee for low-income tenants. From my perspective, there was no reason to change anything in Bill 65 except if they wanted to, again, just rock the boat. There was no one advocating for the change—no stakeholders, no associations, no one except this Liberal government—and it's incredibly disturbing that a one-sided amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Board would even be considered without widespread consultation.

We don't know the cost of this decision. In a briefing, the ministry could not reveal who will qualify for the waived fee. The fear now is that it will open the floodgates for disgruntled landlords or tenants to take every minor dispute to the Landlord and Tenant Board, causing further delay in a system that is already horrendously backlogged, not to mention the fact that the fee is a cost-recovery mechanism for the board's operations, which means Ontario taxpayers will be called to subsidize revenue shortfalls.

Instead of erring on the side of caution to ensure this important issue is passed in the Legislature, the Premier has taken what should have been a non-partisan bill and made it somewhat political by putting this fee in. From a Premier who prides herself on being different than Dalton McGuinty and repeatedly talking about how much she believes in co-operation, it's certainly strange that she would include what can only be described as a poison pill in legislation that previously had all-party support. In fact, it doesn't make sense. Again, we had co-operation on this bill before prorogation, and now we get an amendment thrown in out of left field.

This is nothing but yet another attempt by the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government to wedge issues and play conniving political games on the backs of taxpayers. It's 100% unacceptable behaviour, but not necessarily

surprising coming from a government that prorogued the Legislature for political gain, cancelled power plants days before the 2011 election to save Liberal seats and are responsible for doubling our \$411-billion debt and \$10-billion deficit.

The \$45 filing fee is completely unrelated and an unnecessary amendment to this legislation that almost defeats the purpose of the bill itself. In essence, we would be moving the cases from one backlogged court system and creating another backlogged system.

While I would like to affirm my belief that the Landlord and Tenant Board is a better option for these disputes—less costly, more efficient and so on—since the Premier seems to have opened the debate about the problems at the Landlord and Tenant Board, it reminds me of a number of other concerns that I have heard from constituents that perhaps should be reviewed.

#### 0910

In one letter I received from a constituent from Collingwood, you can almost feel his frustration. He wrote:

"Dear Mr. Wilson:

"I am writing with concerns about the Landlord and Tenant Act. The rules, the processes, the judgments, do not serve the landlords, they serve the tenants. I am a landlord and have an extremely difficult tenant who runs the show at my property which is located in Collingwood. He parks where he wants, he harasses other tenants. He routinely uses foul and offensive language. He is familiar with the Landlord and Tenant Act, and realizes that it is an extremely difficult process and next to impossible, to have him removed. He has chased many good tenants from my property, because they feel hassled, and they decided to move. He is an alcoholic, who is making life as a tenant and a landlord miserable.

"This is my property (he was there when I bought it) and he runs the show around there with the aid of legislation which is too favourable toward tenants' rights.

"The system is failing me and I have no control over my property."

Similar concerns were raised in a recent missive out of the Federation of Rental Housing Providers of Ontario in a 2011 report entitled *Justice Denied: Ontario's Broken Rent Dispute Process*:

"Ontario's rent dispute process is broken.... It is excessively long, and is unjust to landlords. It typically takes 90 days in Ontario for a dispute to be finally resolved, and costs the landlord about \$5,200, not including administrative costs, lost time and productivity. That's only the typical process.

"If a 'professional tenant' is involved, he or she uses requests for internal board reviews and appeals to the Superior Court to add even more delays; these tenants easily use Ontario's system to bilk landlords of up to one year's rent, suffer no consequences, and cause severe financial and emotional distress....

"Ontario's outdated rent dispute process needs to be modernized. Most other jurisdictions in Canada have fair and efficient rent dispute processes in place, proving an efficient system is achievable. In the western provinces,

the process takes anywhere from one fifth to one third the time it takes in Ontario.

"The broken system is also bad for tenants. For a number of tenants, the delays in the system only make matters worse for them, leading them to develop large arrears which they can't rectify, and ultimately affecting their credit rating and their future."

You see, if you want to discuss it, there are obvious problems with the Landlord and Tenant Board. We all know that. But if we look at changes, they should be done in a fair and transparent way that allows all parties, both tenants and landlords, to have input. The government's job is to do what is in the best interest of all Ontarians, not just of bureaucrats working under the leadership of an unelected Premier and an unstable minority government. While I for now support this legislation, since the Premier opened the debate, I would like to urge her to consider province-wide hearings on reform of the Landlord and Tenant Board so we can best determine in a fair and transparent way for all involved what is working and what is not.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I listened quite intently to what the member had to say and couldn't disagree with him more. I think the Landlord and Tenant Board works extremely well. We made some significant changes about four or five years ago that basically put both landlords and tenants in an equal position, so that if there are issues to be decided by the board on whether the landlord is due his rent or whether the tenant has legitimate issues with respect to repairs and things like that, it would all be done in one hearing. Prior to that, there had to be two separate hearings, and there were all sorts of questions raised in the House for a number of years. It's kind of interesting that since the change was made to have all issues dealt with at the same time, there has not been one question in this House in the last six years about the operation of the Landlord and Tenant Board.

With respect to the potential waiver of fees, rules are to be set by the board, and what we're proposing is absolutely no different from the rules that are already in effect with respect to many other administrative tribunals, such as the Ontario Municipal Board. So it is just a red herring. If the Tories support the co-ops having the right to use the board, like they did last year, they should vote for it. Let's get it to committee, and let's iron out whatever the differences may be. But to call for province-wide hearings is just a red herring.

We're here to do the people's business. Let's get on with it. Let's stop playing games. This bill has now been in this House for 13 hours of debate. It's a little bit like the local food bill, which has been here for about 20 hours of debate. These are good pieces of legislation for the people of Ontario. So stop filibustering every bill that comes here. Let's get to work, get it to committee and get it done. Other than that, have a great day, folks.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Simcoe—Grey, I believe, made the point that needs to be made on Bill 14 with respect to there's probably good and bad.

I think resolving disputes is really what this bill attempts to do, and I think the current experience I have in my riding with the Landlord and Tenant Board seems to have a bias built into it in terms of the position going in. At least that's the perception. I would say anything you can do to clarify some mechanism to resolve disputes without a bias, to look at the facts—I know most members would know from any party that the tenant can be exceptionally abusive to a landlord. In my case, I'm thinking of families that have retired and their income source has been diversified such that they probably own a second home or a cottage that they're deciding to rent. Then they've got a problem tenant and the tenant knows the rules or the ropes, and pretty soon the dispute amounts to not paying the rent, trashing the property, and the landlord, in this case a retired couple, is left holding the bag. There are other occasions when there are arguments to be made, I'm sure, of landlords that are perhaps abusive, as well.

So I think we need to have fairness in any dispute mechanism, and I think the experience that most MPPs, if they're paying attention—we would like to make and streamline the process. The option is, of course, to go to the courts. To go to the courts is going to be an unfair and unbalanced relationship as well.

We have to make sure there's fairness, and I don't see that specifically in the rules here. I'd like to see a little more clarity in the rules of the balance that's going to be in the hearing itself.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Families in my community are waiting years—up to 20 years, almost—for affordable housing. I've been waiting for this debate to come to an end for it seems like 20 years, and the truth is we've been waiting for affordable housing to be built for going on decades now. So I'm actually going to stop speaking right now. We need less talk in this chamber and more action in this province on housing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's a pleasure to rise in support of the comments of my colleague from Simcoe—Grey. He has only brought to this chamber what we have heard in terms of criticisms and concerns of this piece of legislation. To hear the Attorney General suggest that we are filibustering when we simply want to debate the issues, I think, is going a bit too far. This is a chamber of debate, a chamber of ideas—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** And you can try to shout me down, as you always do, Minister of Transportation, but I'm going to continue to speak. Because as I like to point out, my colleague from Simcoe—Grey has been in this esteemed chamber, both in the opposition as well as in the cabinet, and he has a great deal of experience in speaking



about legislation. He is our House leader. He brought forward, I think, some very valuable concerns, concerns that have been raised by landlords and others across the province, and I think it is legitimate debate.

Our party, of course—the Progressive Conservative Party—will be putting up a number of speakers today on Bill 14, the non-profit housing co-operatives, because we feel that there needs to be more conversation, as, of course, is the tag line of the new Premier. She likes to talk about conversations, she likes to talk about discussions, and she likes to talk about process. Well, when this side of the House decides it wants to engage in conversation, discussion and talk about the process, they want to obstruct us in doing so.

But I must say to my colleague from Simcoe—Grey, I agree with your comments. I agree with your concerns. I think that you've done a service not only to your constituents but to the stakeholders involved in this process. I think that it is very legitimate and valid for you to be having this conversation, and I do appreciate the opportunity that we are having this debate at this present moment.

Again, I want to talk about—in the 10 seconds I have left—the fact that this government will only want to talk about discussion and process and conversations when it suits them. But when this side of the assembly wants to debate an issue, they want to shut it down.

0920

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Simcoe—Grey has two minutes.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I thank my colleagues who spoke. I say to the Attorney General and the Liberals: You're the first government—maybe you don't know this because you've had a majority for nine years—not to take bills around the province. On almost every bill, whether it was a Mike Harris or Ernie Eves government, and for many, many governments before that, we always went to the four corners. We went somewhere in the north, usually Sudbury or Thunder Bay. We always went to the southwest, either London or Windsor. We always went to Ottawa or Kingston, and we had hearings in Toronto. That was the norm on almost every legislation—and by the way, it was faster than the process we're in now, because it took four days, usually, on the road and usually a couple of days in Toronto. We would have it done in a week or a week and a half, in committee.

Your arrogant approach to governing, by trying to shut this place down—in fact, you did, for the first time in history. We had a leadership, I can remember, between Ernie and Mike. We took the weekend to do it, and we brought Parliament back on the Monday, like we were supposed to. You selfish people, you closed it down. You run around to the interest groups and say—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You might want to sit down.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, the member from Simcoe—Grey, I was standing for at least 15 seconds. You ignored me totally, thank you very

much. Secondly, I suggest you stick to the agenda; you were wandering a bit. Thank you.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** On a point of order, Speaker: Mike Harris used to say that the consultation took place during the election time. That's what he said—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** That's not a point of order—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:**—about consultation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It's an honour to rise this morning on behalf of the residents of Dufferin—Caledon to discuss Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Excluding the lengthy title, there are certain aspects of Bill 14 that I am supportive of. In fact, I don't think it's by any means a stretch to say that certain aspects of Bill 14 not only have all-party support in this House, but have had all-party support for quite some time. I say this because in the last session, the Liberal government introduced a bill—Bill 65, of course—which was also generally well-received by all parties. Bill 65 was, for all intents and purposes, the same bill as Bill 14. This is with the exception of one particular measure that has been added to Bill 14, but I will touch on that momentarily.

First, I just want to summarize how we've gotten to this point, and I think it's a useful exercise. I say this because lately, when I've been reviewing government legislation, I get a déjà vu feeling. I get that feeling because a great deal of the government's legislation was already introduced in the last session. Bill 14 is an example of this because, as I mentioned, Bill 65 in the previous session was almost the identical bill.

As I was saying, Bill 65 was introduced in April of last year—actually, it was April 16, so over a full year ago. At that time, a year ago, our critic for municipal affairs and housing—who does an excellent job, I might add—the member for Leeds—Grenville, stood up in this chamber and outright announced that not only would the official opposition be supporting Bill 65, but also pointed out that we have been calling for its reforms for some time.

On its face, this was a great situation. It was a great situation because, as you know, Speaker, things have been somewhat toxic in this place under this particular government, what with the Ornge scandal and the gas plant scandal, contempt proceedings—well, you get the picture. In light of all that, I think it's great that there was some legislation that we could all agree on, something that all parties agreed was good for Ontarians and was a well-needed reform.

The thing is, though, like a lot of good legislation that has been proposed, the Liberal government totally wiped out Bill 65 when the former Premier prorogued the Legislature last fall. This is a very important point, I feel, because while I anticipate Bill 14 will be passed on to committee for some needed amendments, I cannot help

but point out that Bill 65 should already be law. I can't help but get frustrated when I hear the respective ministers stand up here in the chamber or go out in front of the television cameras and talk about how critical their bills are and how important it is that they must be passed, because the reality is a lot of these bills could already be law if their government hadn't prorogued the Legislature last fall. Even if you're going to prorogue, there is an opportunity for bills to be carried over. We all know how that system works. That could have happened with Bill 65 as well.

That's why it's so astonishing that members of the party opposite have the audacity to stand in this chamber, as they have previously, and accuse members of the opposition of stalling legislation through debate. It was their party that wiped out all that we had achieved with Bill 65, and you had to restart the whole process. That's the abbreviated version of how we got here today, debating Bill 14.

I want to focus on two points of Bill 14 specifically. One was contained in Bill 65 and, I believe, supported by all parties. The other is a new aspect of Bill 14 that was not in Bill 65. It's the second point, the new one, that I have a slight problem with.

But for now I want to discuss the good aspect of Bill 14, and that is the transferring of tenure disputes from the court system to the Landlord and Tenant Board. This is a good move, it's a practical move and it makes sense. All of the disputes regarding housing, including things like rent arrears, late payment of rent, wilful damage and illegal activities by tenants etc. are settled at the Landlord and Tenant Board, so it only makes sense to have a uniform approach and have everything settled at the same body.

I will point out that the Landlord and Tenant Board is not without problems of its own. However, from a streamlining point of view, this transfer makes sense. This is because, as we all know, the court system itself has its issues with backlogs, not to mention costs. Removing tenure disputes from the courts will thus not only help relieve some of the pressures on our court system but also help save co-op members a great deal of money. Resolving these disputes in the courts costs co-op members approximately \$1 million in unnecessary legal costs every single year, and with these disputes contributing to the court backlog I mentioned, it costs taxpayers too, because of the precious court resources that are being used on these cases. On this we can agree, and have agreed.

I can't help but point out, Speaker, at \$1 million a year in costs to co-op members having to go through the courts, that one could potentially argue this government's inaction and self-serving priorities have indirectly contributed to that penalizing cost because, as I mentioned earlier, Bill 14's original version, Bill 65, was introduced a year ago. Yet here we are a year later, another \$1 million later in legal costs to co-op members, another year later of disputes backlogging our court system, and still we're talking about the same issue—and it's the one we

agree on. So again, we have an example of the party opposite's plain, basic inability to effectively manage our province's government.

As our leader, Tim Hudak, pointed out yesterday during question period, every day, when a newborn child comes into this world in Ontario, they're immediately burdened with a \$20,000 share of the provincial debt. That's due to the financial and managerial incompetence of the Liberal government, and it's a direction that we in the official opposition vehemently disagree with.

But back to Bill 14. As I was saying, this reform of transferring the tenure disputes to the Landlord and Tenant Board is something we can all agree on. Great. So let's get it passed, right? Not so fast. You see, there is a new aspect to Bill 14 that was not in Bill 65, and this is the notion that the Landlord and Tenant Board should have the power to waive the \$45 filing fee for low-income tenants.

Like a lot of things this government says, it sounds good but, upon closer inspection, doesn't really hold up to scrutiny. You see, the ministry couldn't say just who would qualify as a low-income tenant. Alternatively, this low-income status will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

This is problematic, I feel, for a couple of reasons. Chief among them is that the filing fee represents a cost-recovery mechanism for the Landlord and Tenant Board's operation. If we start waiving the fee, my question to the minister would be, where will that money come from?

The money to operate the board is going to have to come from somewhere, particularly with the new responsibility of resolving tenure disputes, as I've discussed. As the transfer of these dispute resolutions will lead to a higher caseload for the Landlord and Tenant Board, it stands to reason that the board may also see a proportionally higher operating cost as well. Otherwise, they will be dealing with backlogs. So that's why I don't think it's prudent to waive a primary source of the board's resources.

**0930**

The other problem I see with waiving the fee is that it risks seeing a sharp increase in complaints to the Landlord and Tenant Board. This is because, with the possibility of not having to pay a fee, there would appear to be no reason whatsoever not to file a complaint, regardless of its credibility or severity. And as I mentioned briefly before, the Landlord and Tenant Board is not without its problems; it too has issues with backlogs. So risking making those backlogs worse, and thus making delays even longer, I feel, is not a prudent choice, because it means that legitimate and serious issues that need to be addressed could potentially be held up by frivolous complaints; not only the complaints themselves, but also the idea of reviewing every single person who files a complaint to determine, by some set of criteria we are not privy to, whether or not they can qualify as low-income. This too could potentially add substantially to the length of the process, and no one, whether landlord or



tenant, wants to wait longer for a decision. Furthermore, I am under the impression that the fee is typically returned to the tenant if they are successful at the board. So that's an area of Bill 14 that I think is a problem.

I think it's a shame that we had a bill that everyone agreed on, that was supported all around, and now we've changed it in a way to make passing the effective streamlining measures of Bill 14 take longer, and I hope that is resolved at committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's a pleasure to make comment on my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon. What I have found in my time serving alongside her—and it has indeed been a pleasure—is that she is a reasoned, balanced person who always brings facts to this table. She does her homework, she represents her constituents to the best of her ability and she also looks at the big picture for Ontarians across the board.

She's made a good point that Bill 65 was here last year and, in fact, could have been enacted, could be law and could actually be serving the people—which we were duly elected to do here in this chamber—and yet, they prorogued. And to her point again, she said there are mechanisms that could have carried that legislation over so that it would have been enacted, but no, we start all over from scratch.

I find it a bit disingenuous of the Attorney General to bring up the word “filibuster.” Yesterday or the day before in debate, he played to the camera and said, “Why are the PCs prolonging all of this?” What he failed to disclose was that the Liberals spoke to that exact, same bill at every opportunity. So it's a bit disingenuous and disheartening, to say the very least.

Our colleague from Leeds-Grenville stood in this chamber a year ago, almost to the day, and advised that the PCs were prepared to support this legislation that would have actually gone forward and helped people. It could have been helping people, it could have eliminated a million dollars in costs and it could have lessened the court backlogs, and yet here we still are, going through this.

She raised a very good point that the bill does allow a transfer of the dispute resolution process from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board, which is a good thing. Any time we can get more productivity through our courts and those people who have other issues to take forward, it's a good thing. But I also agree that the new point they inserted into this new bill, which we're yet doing over again, definitely has potential for increasing complaints.

They can waive the fee, but again, it's very interesting that they use this ambiguity. They want the 30-second sound bite that sounds great to the public and the media stream, but there's never any substance behind it. If you really start to ask questions—how will this work, who really gets impacted, what's the reality?—there's never any fact there. I'm very disheartened that we're doing this again. They're not serving the people of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I listened to the discussion by the member from Dufferin-Caledon, and I think she made the points I'm hearing repeatedly here, but they need to be stated. The question then becomes, is the government actually listening?

I was looking back at my notes, and last time—this is the third time this bill has been called, and with all due respect and deference to the people who work in this industry, waiting for the right thing to be done, they've been thwarted one more time in the attempt to get this to committee. The government has the power, in different rules, to end this debate if they find that they have a real intent to resolve the issue, and I think that by bringing in a closure motion on that, they would indicate that they have to negotiate a solution. With a minority government, that's really the politics of all this happening. We find much appealing about this bill. At the same time, there are other things that we feel they should be looking at with a different view.

Some of that is the approach to the budget of Ontario. We feel they've made a complete mess of pretty well everything in terms of spending. Even if you look at the hearings that are going on on the gas plants, the hearings that are going on on Ornge and the hearings that are going on on the neglect in health care with respect to chemotherapy, there's much—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd like you to sit down, thank you. The member from Durham is well aware that he's drifting way, way far away from the bill. Maybe you want to get back on track.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Speaker. You're right. I was trying to make a point, though, with your indulgence. The point I was trying to make is that this bill should go to committee. I think we've said that. All of the speakers here see the reasonableness of that point. What's missing is any sense of contriteness or apologetic mode by this government, this not new government—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** This bill basically is good, and we will support it. It's in need of some minor changes, but the main point of sending most disputes to the Landlord and Tenant Board is a great idea. It creates efficiencies. It saves money—approximately \$1 million in costs—which is currently going to lawyers and court costs when we go to courts now. So that will be a welcome thing because, certainly, co-op housing is intended to be cheap housing for people who are in need of subsidized, cheap housing. Every penny counts. So if we can save \$1 million and that would help provide a few more housing units or better maintenance for housing units, that's a great thing.

I see there are a few points that are not included, which I find kind of funny: no pets; clearing of snow and cutting of lawns would still go to court. I'm a little puzzled by that. Surely the Landlord and Tenant Board could

deal with fairly minor issues like that. But at committee these amendments could be made.

Consideration of landlords' rights against frivolous complaints by tenants who would abuse the system and go to the Landlord and Tenant Board on a pointless, frequent basis: Those kinds of questions have to be addressed, and landlords' rights and concerns have to be addressed.

The fees for cost recovery, I would suggest that would have to be looked at. I'm not sure why we need to be charging fees to people who basically can't afford a house. I would suggest maybe an appropriate thing that a committee could look at would be the waiving of fees.

In short, I think what we have here is the essence of a good bill that our party will support. We look forward to speaking to it at committee, making some necessary changes, having input from people in the community such as landlords, in particular, and making it even better.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's good to be back. I was away yesterday. The Governor General was in my riding. I then had a chance to meet with Minister Meilleur up in Whitney looking at some of the flood damage from the high water levels on the Madawaska system, particularly at Galeairy Lake.

I have heard my colleagues ask repeatedly, "Why didn't the government put this bill through before?" Then they talk about, "Oh, prorogation." They want us now to extricate them from a problem of their own creation. Like, do we have to do all your work for you over there? Have you not figured it out? You had every opportunity before Dalton McGuinty tried to take a walk off the edge of the cliff, so to speak, and declared that he didn't want to work with you guys anymore—because we never see him. You know that, eh? He could have brought in a programming motion that would have ensured that this bill was dealt with. This bill would have been dealt with. Now we see the government wanting the PCs to do their work for them.

**0940**

Well, the one thing that is very clearly provided for in the standing orders of this House, in the rules of debate, is that every member who wishes to speak to a bill will have the opportunity to do so. The government can change that. The government can take that away. The government has the ability. The government can bring in a closure motion. If they want this debate to end, then bring in a closure motion, but we still have members who believe that they have the right and the responsibility to speak to this piece of legislation. It affects them in their ridings; it affects people all across the province.

Do we want to see this bill move forward? Absolutely. Do we want to see it get to committee? Absolutely. Do we believe that the—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** "Absolutely" was my last word, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Very good. The member from Dufferin—Caledon has two minutes.  
**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thank you, Speaker.

It fascinates me that for a government that talks about respectful conversation, there was not a single member of the NDP or the Liberal caucus who chose to stand up and comment on my debate.

To the members from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, Durham, Carleton—Mississippi Mills, and Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, thank you for the feedback. Thank you for the comments. Perhaps the respectful conversation that is happening in the chamber and in Ontario is between two parties, excluding the official opposition. I don't know; I'm not privy to it. But I do find it intriguing that no one has chosen to talk about the specific issues that I raised about Bill 14/65 in my 10 minutes of debate.

As I raised, when it comes to the Premier's promise of co-operation and conversations, it's starting to sound a lot like empty rhetoric. The Premier pledged over and over again, with great fanfare, a new approach of co-operation with the opposition parties, yet we just saw an example today where not only did you not participate in the debate and you are not commenting on the debate that is occurring, but you're just sitting—I see half of you on your BlackBerrys and half of you reading the newspaper.

This debate is important to Ontario, this debate does make a difference, and you have a responsibility as a legislator to participate in it and ensure that we are getting it right. That is the point of debating in this chamber. That is the point of committees and public hearings: to hear from the public, to hear from the stakeholders, to ensure that we have got it right. I'm not sure you have it right with Bill 14, and I find it very unfortunate that you have chosen to not even participate in a debate on such an important piece of legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm pleased to have an opportunity to speak to the bill, and I'd like to recognize the members from the co-op industry here to listen to debate. Welcome.

I think it's very important to recognize the role that co-op housing plays in our community. Co-op housing provides a unique form of housing for the 125,000 people across the province who live in the 550 co-op housing complexes. It allows its members to come together in a common purpose.

We recognize that not everyone in Ontario can afford to buy a house or a condo. Through its membership-based model, co-op housing provides the opportunity for those who otherwise can't afford to take these things a chance to take pride in ownership over their living environment.

The co-op model is an elegant solution to meet the needs in our community. My riding of Elgin—Middlesex—London is home to a number of co-op housing complexes. I had an opportunity to meet with some of them last December from the Elmview Estates co-op, the Meadowdale Community Housing Co-op, the Pinafore



Station Co-op and the Stirling Meadows Housing Co-op. There are two others in my riding that I have not yet had a chance to meet with: Troy Village Housing Co-op in Aylmer and, of course, the Whiteoak Heritage Housing in south London. Together, these complexes alone provide 340 units in my riding.

When I met with the representatives from my area's co-op complexes, they described to me the benefits of the membership received from having an ownership stake and management responsibilities for their housing units. I enjoyed at the time, December, the fact that people living in the co-ops would get together and have a Christmas gathering for the kids. The kids would receive gifts. It kind of forms their own little community that strengthens each other. I've talked to other people in the community about the co-op housing, and they find it great, the fact that babysitters—they look out for one another's kids when they're out playing. If they have to make a quick errand to go get something in an emergency or just go to the grocery store quickly, their neighbour is quite readily available to help them out. I find that is unique now. We find in the other types of neighbourhoods that we have, or out in the rural communities, where you're far and few between, that it's a lot harder to get the extra help in the community. So this co-op housing pretty much brings together the old-fashioned type of community we used to see 20 or 30 years ago.

Clearly, the virtues of co-op housing are immense, but as with anything, disputes will inevitably arise. The matter of housing, co-op or otherwise, lends itself to a fair share of disputes over things like rent arrears, late payments, wilful property damage and interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of their property.

For years, people have had to turn to the court systems to resolve their disputes. Thankfully, we're not as litigious a society as the United States, but our court systems do get overburdened. That's why I'm proud to say that it was Premier Harris who recognized this and took action in 1997. Under his leadership, Ontario used a tribunal system, rather than courts, to settle tenure disputes in rental housing. This sparked a trend of lawmakers across Canada to keep civil cases out of the expensive court system. Using tools like mediation and arbitration, both landlords and tenants have access to a fair, cost-effective way to resolve their disputes.

While this marked a step forward in rental housing, the move did not account for co-op housing. Members of a co-op housing unit must still rely on the court system to settle their disputes. The ministry has estimated that the cost of resolving co-op disputes in the courts can range from \$3,000 to \$5,000 each. Annual legal costs of co-op members for the approximately 300 cases heard each year are in the neighbourhood of \$1 million. These really are punitive amounts for tenants and landlords simply seeking a way to resolve their disputes.

I'll give this government credit. It recognized the deficiency in the system and proposed a piece of legislation to overcome it. Of course, I'm not talking about Bill

14, which is the subject of today's debate; I'm talking about Bill 65.

The two bills, in terms of content and text, are the same. The only difference is, Bill 65 was introduced just over a year ago, on April 16. Back then, the PC Party and my colleagues had said what we're saying now: We will support this bill through second reading and work with all parties in committee to ensure its final form optimizes the benefits for all co-op housing providers and their tenants.

For a government that accuses us of always saying no and of being averse to any types of collaboration, our willingness—eagerness, even—to get the work moving on co-op unit disputes to the Landlord and Tenant Board proves otherwise. It is a policy that makes sense from both a cost perspective and an access-to-justice perspective. The PC Party's focus has always been and will always be to push for the most practical, beneficial and cost-effective reforms, for the benefit of Ontario, and this legislation, in principle, falls into that category.

We were prepared last year to support Bill 65 and work with the government and the NDP to offer reasoned amendments to enhance it. And what was this government's next move when it came to Bill 65? They let it sit on the order paper and ultimately killed it with their cynical move to prorogue Parliament. This is what happens when we have a government that makes decisions based on politics and not on good government. Another example of this is the erroneous bill the taxpayers have been saddled with for the government's GTA seat-saving plan, the gas plant cancellation. When we should have been debating ways to get our economy moving again, creating jobs for the half a million people out of work, and figuring out ways to reduce our debt and deficit before the credit rating agencies downgrade us again, we were locked out of the chamber.

As for Bill 14, previously Bill 65, we are debating it today, knowing full well that it should already be law. If we refer back to some statistics I quoted earlier, in the year that this bill has been delayed, 300 co-op-related tenure cases have appeared before a court, at a cost of a million dollars to the co-op members. Again, the government has delayed progress and hurt the people we're supposed to be representing.

The final point I'd like to make is over an amendment this bill is proposing without any consultation. The bill talks about waiving the fee for the Landlord and Tenant Board for low-income tenants, without actually defining "low income." I'm sure that if a consultation process was done previous to reintroducing this bill, this could have been fixed and clear definitions defined.

**0950**

My other concern with this bill is, once it gets to committee, of the government actually bringing it back for third reading. There are many bills that we have done over the past two years which—many of them died during prorogation, of course. Now we have a whole slew of bills in committee, and we haven't quite seemed to get them back to this House for third reading. So I call upon

this government, when this bill is finally passed, to get it through committee as fast as possible and bring it back for third and final reading.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** You're joking, right?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** No, I'm not joking; not at all.

Mr. Speaker, I'm definitely feeling that we can work together on this issue. We have done so under the guidance of our lead critic, Steve Clark, from Leeds–Grenville, who has a strong grasp of this issue and other issues that are affecting Ontarians. I feel that perhaps it's time that the government can work with us in the committee and try to get these amendments and consultations put through so that, at the end of the day, we can come up for third reading and get this bill passed, which should have already been enacted into law last year.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Why wasn't it?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Of course, it wasn't last year, basically, because of the prorogation that occurred on October 16.

Mr. Speaker, I will love to hear the comments. Perhaps this time around, the government can have a two-minute hit and maybe the third party. My party is continually discussing and giving advice on this bill, and I look forward to their comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** With that, I'm pleased to kick in and do this two-minute hit on my colleague from St. Thomas–Elgin–Middlesex—

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Elgin–Middlesex–London.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Elgin. I always call it Elgin–Middlesex. Isn't that something? Elgin–Middlesex–St. Thomas—and London; I'll throw that in there for good measure as well.

But you know what? My colleague here, nevertheless, has really hit the nail on the head in that we have had a concern here because good bills totally died on the floor. As he said, it's great to see this bill come back, because we understand the importance of lessening the burden on ordinary Ontarians. That's what the PC Party is all about, and that's what we stand for.

If we can work through this particular bill—in a co-operative fashion, I might say—we should be able to realize some ease of burden on our folks and allow people who have disputes with their landlords to save some dollars. Instead of going to the courts, they can go through the Landlord and Tenant Board and actually get some realization and some resolve in issues that really shouldn't be stress and extra dollars on a taxpayer who's already burdened.

As I said, we're glad this bill came back. We can't get it through into committee fast enough because this is something that's going to make life in Ontario a little bit easier. But then we have to get to the tough parts. We have to get to what else will make living in Ontario a little bit easier—not only co-operative living, but we've got to address the cost of ever-rising energy bills.

It's a travesty how the government and the third party are dealing with issues and painting by political colours

as opposed to addressing good policy and making sure that we can work together to ensure that life is a little bit more affordable in Ontario. We need to work together to achieve that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's absolutely a pleasure to follow my colleague from Elgin–Middlesex–London. Mr. Yurek always comes prepared. He works very diligently on behalf of his constituents. He's concerned about this in his riding, and he's doing his right and his obligation to the people who sent him here to Queen's Park to actually stand up and debate these issues.

I found it interesting—although he may have said it in jest, the colleague across the floor from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell uses the word that we were just “whining.” Well, I would like to take this opportunity to remind him that the role of the official opposition is to challenge the government and make sure that we're bringing the thoughts of our taxpayers to this chamber. Our job is to represent them and to hold the government of the day to account, and let me tell you, Speaker—you know this as well as I do—that's a heck of a big job right now. If we start talking about the corruption of the gas plant scandals that's going to cost the taxpayers of this great province probably a billion dollars or more, the Ornge boondoggle and another billion dollars, the eHealth boondoggle, the tax they said they wouldn't raise—and they still haven't cured the ills of the health ministry despite all of that.

I would be remiss, particularly with my colleague from Huron–Bruce in the crowd, to not bring up the Green Energy Act and that that government removed local democracy from the people who are the closest to the people.

It's interesting that Bill 14—that the Liberals have chosen, along with their coalition partner, the NDP, to not discuss this matter. Yet this legislation has been delayed because of that party and the third party sitting on their hands, choosing not to do anything and to prop them up at budget time last year, and then the prorogation took this off. They could have had all of this in place. They could have actually been helping people, which they always suggest in this House that they're here to do.

This bill needs some revision. We're generally in support of it; my colleague from Leeds–Grenville said that a year ago. Let's get it to committee. We want the two parties to work with us so we can get this to be enacted.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I just want to let the members from the Conservatives and the Liberals—I've been in my seat since 9 o'clock. I've been listening to the debate. Part of debate is listening. I have been listening, and I respectfully listened to the points that you have been bringing across. We all agree that this should be referred to a committee, as is my understanding. So let's do that. But I take great offence when you're telling me that I'm not part of this debate. I'm listening. I am here; I am in my seat.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I agree with our colleague down the way that it should go to committee. We will complete this debate at some point, and it will go there.

This is a most worthy bill. It addresses the needs of people who, through no fault of their own, have trouble getting housing. So we're helping them, as a compassionate society, to find the housing they need. A lot of people put a lot of effort into providing housing for people who have this need, at an affordable rate.

The changes in this bill will help make it more efficient and more effective, and more cost-effective, to deliver non-profit housing to those who are in need in our communities. We have people in our galleries who work very hard and talk to all of us in the Legislature about doing just that. So the changes here are most welcome.

We are going to reduce the cost of solving disputes by not going to courts and by going to the Landlord and Tenant Board—we'll save about a million dollars. This will go toward providing more cost-effective housing for people who are in need.

We have a lot of co-op housing in my riding. I've had the pleasure, during campaigning, of knocking on the doors of those people. I met an awful lot of wonderful citizens who, through no fault of their own, are in need of help with respect to economical housing. So it's a wonderful thing that is done with co-operative not-for-profit housing, and we strongly support this.

We do need to go to committee. We will do that; we will support the bill. There are changes that need to be made that will make it even better and fairer for both sides, meaning tenants and landlords, and we look forward to having input into that and to hearing input from people in the community who have concerns and have good input to make this a better bill. We look forward to going there—to going to committee. We look forward to this bill passing, and we look forward to helping people get the housing that they need at the most affordable price possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London has two minutes.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** You're a little late. Thank you.

I'd like to thank the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, the member from Huron–Bruce, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and his yellow paper and, of course, the member from Algoma–Manitoulin. Thank you very much for your comments.

I would like to make note of comments from the government side that this is a waste of time. I feel this isn't a waste of time. I was elected to speak on behalf of my constituents, and I know how politics works, over the short time I've been here. If I didn't address this issue, if I didn't say anything in this Legislature, the next election coming up, I'm sure the candidate for the government side against me would raise that issue that I was quiet,

and I will not be quiet for my constituents. I will bring them forward and—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:**—my words.

To the third party, we have twice as many members as you in the House, so naturally we're going to take a little bit longer in our debates in order to get every one of our 36 members here an opportunity to address the Legislature.

On the other side of the half is, I agree with you, listening and understanding the debate that's going on. I can only hope that, come budget time in another three or four weeks, you do more than just listen and sit on your hands this year; that you help and vote down this government, because there is no confidence in this government anymore.

**1000**

**Mr. Speaker,** this is a great bill going forward. Bill 14, which was Bill 65 originally, should have been passed, as I mentioned earlier, but due to prorogation they had to start from scratch. We're getting close to having this bill voted on and passed. I'm just hoping that this government realizes that once it hits committee, let's speed up the process and get it back here for third reading and get it enacted into law.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Hamilton Mountain.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Am I doing further debate or comments and questions?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I was actually scheduled for debate today, but I choose not to take my debate time, because we really need to move this legislation forward. We need to get it into committee. The poor people from the co-op housing have been here day after day after day listening to debate. They were not only here during this portion of the session, but they were here before it was prorogued. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say, "Enough said." Let's move it on. I've been in my seat since 9 a.m. this morning listening to debate, and I know other members have been also. I'm looking forward to further debate from the Conservatives. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** That's the shortest further debate I've heard.

*Questions and comments?*

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Again, I support that bill very, very much because of all the good things that co-ops are doing in my community and all the projects that they're moving forward with. But I told you, you better stay here, because the opposition party is saying that they're supporting your bill, but really they're not supporting your bill. That's why they keep talking about it—and you will hear once in a while that they want to change the heart of the bill. That's what they want. They want to bring it to committee, but they think that by speaking and speaking you will go away and then they will be able to say that they are not supporting the bill. So

stay here. It's unfortunate that you have to be here when really you have other, better things to do, but stay here, keep an eye on them—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Could I remind the minister that she's not addressing the people in the gallery; she's supposed to talk through me. Thank you.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** The message is for you too, okay? Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** To the member from Hamilton Mountain, I believe passionately that she could have used her time to put a voice to her constituents. That's really what this is about. Now, I'm not saying what your voice should be and what comments you should make, but I think the point has been made this morning that we have indeed a right and a privilege, a responsibility. There is a question here today suggesting that we should sit down and just shove this through. To me, there's so much of that going on in this Legislature, and I say in committee as well, where the government, even in question period—and this does apply to Bill 14. The government in question period is ditching the questions off on gas plants, billion-dollar waste, and they're never actually answering the question or disclosing information that they could be said to be covering up. I'm not going to say "covering up," because it would be wrong, but I'm just saying that's the real issue.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Durham knows—he's been here long enough—that we don't use words like that. Withdraw.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I withdraw that, but—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Not "but"; withdraw.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I guess the point I'm trying to make is this is the third time this piece of legislation has come before this House. On each occasion it's been delayed or prorogued so that the debate has not concluded. I have no confidence in this government that this Bill 14 will actually make it into this House. I believe after the budget—and I believe the coalition between the NDP and the Liberals will pass the budget—we'll be out of here in June and this will not even be in committee. There's all kinds of bills that aren't at committee. I don't have any confidence in this government—and I respect Harvey and his colleagues who are here. You are being manipulated by this government, in my view.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. The reason that this won't get to committee, by the way, for those who are listening, is that the Progressive Conservatives keep putting speakers up on the bill. What we've been asked for from the stakeholders—and trust me, Mr. Speaker,

this is not an earth-shattering bill; this is a very small thing that needs to be done to help our co-ops.

I want to give a shout-out to 55 Howard Park, that celebrated their anniversary just the other day—20 years. We're going to be standing up for about eight to 10 seconds each—we're going to be giving our questions and comments—because we want to see this bill get to committee, and we can make that happen if the Progressive Conservatives work with us on this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I have a problem with the official opposition's credibility. They have a majority in Ottawa, and I have heard today every member opposite talk about their passion for co-op housing. Could they then explain one thing to me: Why is the majority federal government not renewing rent-geared-to-income subsidies? Why, if they care about this bill and they're not holding it up and obstructing it, are their federal counterparts dumping about 12,000 families out of affordable housing because they're refusing to renew the income supplements under section 95 of the federal act?

The Conservative Party—and how many of you have written one letter to your federal counterpart? How many—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I can barely hear myself. Could you please ask them to—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay, folks. I'm going to have to start moving into action soon. Get my drift?

Continue.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** If there's any value to the words that these people actually care, how are they standing by, not writing a letter? Why has there not been a question? Why has there been nothing out of the Ontario so-called Progressive Conservative Party, that they're not even aware that 12,000 Ontario families are about to lose their affordable housing because of that party?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Burlington.

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'm pleased to rise today to take part in the continuing debate around Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act.

I'd like to commend the member from Leeds–Grenville for taking such an active interest in this issue around co-operative housing since taking on the portfolio of municipal affairs and housing critic for the official opposition.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I've been informed by the table that you're the fifth speaker, so you'll have to sit down.

The member from Hamilton Mountain has a two-minute response.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not want to question that judgment call there. I find it offensive that I'm told that I don't stand in this House



and represent my constituents, because I have stood many times on this bill speaking to the great work of co-ops happening in my riding. I have a fabulous relationship with all of the co-ops. I visit them frequently. I'll give a personal shout-out to a woman who's become a very good friend of mine, Tracy Geddes with Applegrove co-op housing. She had knee surgery the other day, and I hope that she's recovering well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I will not be speaking any further to this debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.  
*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1008 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I don't believe she's in the chamber, but I know that she's wandering the halls as part of the delegation of the OFA. It's a pleasure for me to introduce Eleanor Renaud, who is a councillor with the township of Elizabethtown-Kitley. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** It's my pleasure to introduce the Cassavetes family; Dale, Kim, Cristene and Kevin; grandmother Lillian McConnell; cousin Lauren McConnell; brother-in-law Renzo Viecei—and Nicole's best friend, Katelynn Labrosse. They are here at Queen's Park today to get answers about Nicole Cassavetes's passing at Sick Kids.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd like to welcome representatives of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and particularly president Mark Wales and vice-president Don McCabe, who are with us here today.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine who is a councillor for Malahide township and also the president of the OFA: Mark Wales, who's somewhere here.

I also have here—I was talking to him on the weekend—Father Mark Sargeant was somewhere on the premises yesterday or will be today. I just want to welcome him.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** This morning, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture hosted a breakfast here. I was happy to attend and introduce to the Legislative Assembly, from my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan, the northern rep on the OFA, Ms. Peggy Brekvelde.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Our page captain today, Jack Greenberg, has his mother, Tracey Collinson, in with us today and also his father, Mark Greenberg; his brother Henry Greenberg; his grandmother Eleanor Greenberg; and his grandfather Harold Greenberg. Welcome to the Legislature of Ontario.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** It's my pleasure to introduce some regional directors for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Peggy Brekvelde was already introduced by my

colleague from Thunder Bay—Atikokan, but we have Ralph Brodie, Bruce Buttar, Keith Currie, Larry Davis and Joe Dickenson. Welcome.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It gives me great pleasure to welcome to the Legislature today Frank Kuri, Hugh Moran, Morley Salmon and David Nelms from the Ontario Petroleum Institute. David Nelms was a legislative page here in 1969 when John Robarts was Premier of Ontario.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I want to introduce today the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants—Debbie Douglas, the executive director; Josie Di Zio, past president; Sudip Minhas, the vice-president and western regional director; Ibrahim Absiye, the treasurer; Don Curry; Léonie Tchatai; Notisha Massaquoi; Maya Roy; and Amy Casipullai. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my pleasure to introduce Paul Wettlaufer, a board member of the OFA, in the members' gallery. Welcome.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm pleased to welcome a wonderful grade 4 and 5 class from Sunnylea Junior School in Etobicoke—Lakeshore who are here today, and their teachers, Rosemary Blackwell and Joanne Barker.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I take great pleasure in introducing two representatives from Meningitis Relief Canada, including the founder and president, Furakh Mir, and Sarbjit Kaur, who are here to mark World Meningitis Day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Making her first visit to Queen's Park, I would like to ask members to recognize, in the members' east gallery, Cassandra George.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** In the members' west gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce, from my riding of Halton, Mr. Liddar, who is the former deputy permanent representative of Canada to the United Nations Environment Programme and to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in Nairobi, Kenya. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's also a pleasure for me to welcome some other members of the board of directors from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture: Larry Freeman, Peter Lambrick, Eleanor Renaud, Louis Roesch, Brent Royce and also—already introduced—Paul Wettlaufer.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'm pleased to introduce Maddy Stieva. She is the treasurer of the Ontario PC association.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I believe we have unanimous consent to wear carnations in honour of World Meningitis Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There is a belief that we have unanimous consent. Do we have unanimous consent to wear the carnations? Agreed? Agreed.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I would like to introduce, in the gallery, the executive director of the North Bay and area multicultural society, Mr. Don Curry.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Last call for introductions.

I have two of my own. I'd like to welcome, from the great riding of Brant, an OFA director and a friend, Mr.

Larry Davis. We're glad you're here with us in the members' gallery.

Here with us in the Speaker's gallery we have the Honourable Ivan Vrdoljak, Minister of Economy of the Republic of Croatia. He is accompanied today by the ambassador of Canada to Croatia and the consul general of the Republic of Croatia, in Mississauga. Let us give them a warm welcome. We're glad you're here with us today.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday your Minister of Finance said that Ontario was the lowest-cost and lowest-tax jurisdiction in North America. I think you know that's not even close to being true.

Your lead on the gas plant committee compared the abuse at the gas plants to a rocket shot to the moon, in terms of being a worthwhile investment. You yourself, in a headline in the Toronto Star on April 3, said that the death of Ontario's manufacturing sector is a myth.

Premier, I don't know if this simply reflects that your government has become out of touch, increasingly arrogant, or whatever you want to call it. I ask you, how do those types of attitudes attract a single job to the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, you know, I believe in talking up Ontario and making sure people understand that this is a place where business can thrive.

The comment about manufacturing arose out of the 10 jobs round tables that I did around the province with some of the ministers in the cabinet, where we talked to people who are in manufacturing who are hiring folks, who are talking to us about how we can invest in innovation to in fact grow the manufacturing sector, and how important it is that we not lose sight of the fact that Ontario is an important manufacturing centre.

That's where that comment came from—talking up Ontario, making sure we understand that we can draw industry and investment to the province, rather than denigrating the province, which makes no sense to me at all.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Respectfully, Premier, it's not talk that's going to get Ontario moving forward; it's making the right decisions to grow our economy, to rein in spending, to take Ontario down a very different path.

I do want to focus particularly on the plight of the manufacturing sector. We've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs under the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government. Sadly, A.O. Smith in Fergus got the news recently that they're closing down and moving to Tennessee with 350 jobs.

1040

My colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills, Ted Arnott, has been a champion for the manufacturing sec-

tor. He went to the plant himself to try to fight for those jobs, to keep them here in the province of Ontario. Ted is doing the right thing, but it really hurts his ability to attract jobs to the province when the Premier says that the death of manufacturing in Ontario is a myth. Premier, will you apologize for making those dramatically out-of-touch comments?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I spoke with folks in that situation. I had a conversation with the member. I spoke with folks in Fergus in the A.O. Smith plant, and I know that that's a difficult and painful situation; I understand that.

But the reality is that if we are going to thrive as a province, we need to recognize that bringing business to the province is absolutely a possibility, and it's happening. We have regained 400,000 jobs since the downturn. It's absolutely necessary. So we're making sure that we understand the conditions, making sure we understand what the infrastructure is that's needed, so that we can create those conditions so that business will come to the province. That's what we've been doing; that's what we will continue to do, Mr. Speaker. And I would hope that the member opposite would be part of that endeavour.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I talk about one individual. His name is Dan Bailey. I think, Ted, you've known Dan your entire life. Dan would be in his early fifties, and he lost his job at A.O. Smith, part of the decline in the manufacturing sector that you call a myth. Ted himself, Mr. Arnott, from Wellington-Halton Hills—I apologize, Speaker—has now for probably eight years been highlighting the trend downwards in manufacturing jobs. He has brought good ideas to the table. He fights for folks like Dan Bailey. Mr. Bailey, in his early fifties, is going to have a very difficult time getting back into the job market to provide for his family, to pay off the mortgage.

Premier, I'll ask you again, when you see this type of circumstance in Ontario, don't you think you're wrong to say the decline of manufacturing is a myth, and isn't your obligation to support the policies that the member has brought forward, to actually create jobs, open us up for investment to get Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The fact that nearly 32,000 manufacturing jobs have been recovered since the recessionary low—I think that's a good-news story, Mr. Speaker. I think that's something we should focus on.

On top of that, I will just say there are members here today of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. They have come from all across the province, Mr. Speaker, and they—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That will do. Thank you.



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The members of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture know that it is extremely important that in Ontario we understand the importance of the agri-food industry, that we understand that manufacturing includes the agriculture community and includes the agri-food industry, and that innovation in that community, along with in automotive, in natural resources, in agriculture, film, small business—all of that is how we are going to thrive. That's why we've been able to regain 32,000 manufacturing jobs, and we're going to continue on that path as Ontario grows.

### MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier, Speaker: I mentioned the challenges that somebody like Mr. Bailey is going to face. The 300,000 jobs that used to be in our manufacturing sector have now left for other jurisdictions like Tennessee, Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana. Sadly, while the Premier was visiting, I think, Wellington county, she said the following in response to the loss of jobs at A.O. Smith. She said, "We're trending in the right direction."

Premier, when you look at the 350 jobs lost at A.O. Smith, when we find that Westcast in Wingham just laid off more people yesterday, when Stanpac in Smithville is forced to contemplate sending jobs to Texas instead of Ontario because of our hydro rates, don't you think it's time to take a different course, to actually rein in spending, lower taxes, get hydro rates under control? Isn't that the way to bring jobs back?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We know that global competition for manufacturing is—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Oxford, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We understand that. We recognize that we have to take strong action in order to be competitive, and we've been doing that, which is why 32,000 manufacturing jobs have been regained since the recession. So it's extremely important.

I understand that there is a painful reality that when a particular plant closes or a particular business leaves, those jobs are lost. That is a painful reality. I understand that. But we have to focus as a government, and I would think everyone in the Legislature has to focus, on how we make sure people have the right skills so that we can make sure that they get the jobs that are available, because one of the things that manufacturers say to me is, "We're looking for skilled trades. We're looking for people who have a particular skill set." Our responsibility is to make sure we match the labour force with the labour market.

Those jobs will come to the province. We will have that investment, but only if we are positive and we put the conditions in place.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Chatham, come to order.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker.

I don't doubt that the Premier has empathy for Mr. Bailey and the 350 people who lost their jobs at A.O. Smith and those who lost their jobs at John Deere and Caterpillar. But the challenge is, I don't think your government understands the cause of the problem, nor do I believe, Premier, that the Liberal government has an understanding of how to actually move us forward and restore hope to those who have lost hope in our province, who are out of work today.

We've brought forward policies to lower taxes in this province and actually get energy rates under control, to drain that swamp of red tape and regulation and run-around that is, contrary to your finance minister's opinion, the most burdensome in all of Canada. We've put those ideas on the table.

Premier, this should be an alarm bell for you to hit the brakes and go in the opposite direction. Instead of trying to be more like California, why don't you give our policies a chance and restore hope for those without jobs in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I would have to say that when it comes to A.O. Smith, we are doing everything we can as a government to support those workers, who are in a very precarious situation, and we're certainly, both through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, working with all partners—the unions, the company involved, the local mayor and the other leadership, including the member representing Wellington. So we're working hard to do that.

I talked to the mayor last week as well. We've offered to make available to those communities our Communities in Transition fund, our Southwestern Ontario Development Fund—which, of course, the member opposite, the official opposition, opposed its creation. It's an issue that we're taking very seriously. We know that those are jobs that are going to be lost in the coming months, so we're working hard to make sure that those workers can transition into other opportunities.

When it comes to the manufacturing sector, if in the supplementary I have an opportunity to speak to that, I will enjoy that opportunity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I don't doubt that the minister is attempting to respond. He has called the mayor. I just wish you had taken action in the nine years before this plant closed down. The member for Wellington—Halton Hills rang those alarm bells eight years ago. We've brought forward ideas to grow the economy, to create jobs. I be-

lieve the manufacturing sector can make a comeback in Ontario. I believe our better days are yet to come.

But let me ask you this: If you've embarked on policies for nine years that ramped up government spending, that plunged us towards doubling our debt and you're contemplating raising taxes again, don't you understand that's going to cost us more jobs; that's going to dig the hole deeper? It's time to go down a bold new course. Look at our plan. We'll turn the province around and we'll bring good manufacturing jobs back to the province of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Minister?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Here's where I disagree. Our manufacturing sector in this province is making a comeback, and it's making a comeback partly because this party and this government supported the auto sector at a time when the official opposition didn't.

Let me also say that in terms of manufacturing sales, the member opposite, the leader of the official opposition, might be interested to know that manufacturing sales rose in eight provinces in February, led by this province; led by Ontario.

In foreign direct investment, this jurisdiction here in Ontario is the third-best jurisdiction in all of North America for foreign direct investment, and let me give you an example that in fact the Speaker might be familiar with. Just last Friday, an announcement was made in Brantford where a company called Hematite, which supports the auto sector, received \$1.5 million from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund. They've added another line; they're doubling employment in the next two years. The president of that company, John Pavanel, said, "Without the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

1050

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Premier. New Democrats have been clear since the throne speech that if we're going to support a budget, it has to create jobs, it has to strengthen our health care and it has to make life more affordable.

When families sit down to pay their bills, one of the biggest ones is their auto insurance bill. This government has brought in changes to help make the industry more profitable, but has told drivers time and time again that there's nothing more it can do for them. Is the government finally prepared to take some real action to make drivers in this province have a more affordable insurance premium?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We have said that this is an area of great concern to us, that auto insurance premiums in Ontario are too high, that we need to work to make sure that they are lowered, as we have been doing, quite frankly, since 2004. We've made a lot of changes.

Auto insurance rates did go down, on average, I think, 11% across the province. We recognize that they have risen again, and we are committed to working to reduce those.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Here's the frustration for people in my community and for millions of Ontarians in this province: They are paying the highest premiums in Canada. They've seen the government bring in reforms that have put billions of dollars into the pockets of the industry, but their rates keep climbing. Will the government give the Financial Services Commission of Ontario the mandate and the tools to actually bring about a reduction in auto insurance rates by 15%?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm just going to contextualize this because there are a number of issues that have been raised by the third party. Auto insurance is one of them. Home care is one of them. Youth employment is another one. I have said quite clearly that these are all areas that we are interested in and have been interested in working on. They are things that I think absolutely need to be addressed, and we are going to do that in a responsible way, and we're going to do it in a way that is practical and doable, that in fact can be implemented.

I've had a conversation with the leader of the third party. I know that this is a concern, and I know there's a particular approach that the NDP would like to take. We have taken that into consideration, and we are going to work to reduce auto insurance premiums in a way that is practical, that's doable and that will ensure that people in the province will continue to be able to get auto insurance, and at a reduced rate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much. Here's the problem. People in this province feel like they're simply falling behind, but we're determined to make sure they get results in this upcoming budget.

For years, the government has promised that tax cuts to Ontario's largest corporations would trickle down into jobs for Ontarians, that handing out six-figure pay hikes to hospital CEOs would somehow make our patients healthier and that higher insurance industry profits would somehow—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. The third party has the floor, please.

Thank you.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** —and that higher insurance industry profits would trickle down to drivers.

People are tired of the status quo that's simply not working for people here in Ontario. It hasn't worked, and it's time for some real results in this upcoming budget.

The government has already supported a motion to reduce auto insurance rates by 15%. Will the government—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Premier?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** To the member's question, he knows all too well the efforts and the work we've done as a government to try to combat the issues of fraud, recognizing that the root cause of this is the cost of our claims. The costs of the claims in Ontario are 10 times higher than any other province. We've taken the steps necessary to address those issues. We recognize and agree that premiums, as a result, are much too high. We also recognize and acknowledge that the companies did lose money in previous years.

We are doing what's necessary to initiate the change. We're going to work with all parties to try to ensure that we get at this and that we reduce premiums for all Ontarians and the nine million drivers who exist in this great province. We are going to do this. We're going to work with FSCO to get it done.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. Ontarians expect the government will put them first, but instead, this government seems intent on putting private power companies first, like those in Oakville and Mississauga. The Liberals gave a contract to one even though it was borrowing money at 60% per annum. The Liberals told the Ontario Power Authority to abandon its legal defences when it came to settling with another.

Why did the government put the interests of private power companies ahead of the interests of Ontarians?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I appreciate the question. Mr. Speaker, it's hard to believe, but it was just last week that the Auditor General reported on the Mississauga issue. At that time, the very next day, members from the NDP and the Conservatives asked the question about the costs at Oakville: "Why don't you just tell us now the ... cost of cancelling Oakville?" Another one: "Release all of the costs related to the Oakville.... Do it now, Premier. The people of Ontario deserve nothing less." Another one: "Why don't you just reveal the ... cost of the Oakville cancellation?"

Last week, the government did ask the Ontario Power Authority to come to committee with their most up-to-date costs on Oakville. We did move a motion. The government moved a motion yesterday to have the OPA here today and both opposition parties voted against it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Premier, back to you: Two former energy ministers testified they had no idea that their staff were destroying information. But the former chief of staff to those two ministers told us he was destroying information.

Can the Premier tell us whether she can provide any assurance that her staff and the staff of all ministers are acting within the law when it comes to preserving information?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Referred to the government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, the committee is looking into a whole variety of issues related to the gas plants. In terms of the production of documents, the government has worked in good faith to comply with the committee's rulings to the point where, with the encouragement of the Premier, our members last fall moved forward with a motion to have all government ministries in a very wide sweep produce all documents related to the gas plants issue to the committee—and that member, joined by his opposition colleagues, voted against that.

There is a process in place whereby committees can ask for documents. They didn't want to go the route that we suggested. We are working to comply with any requests that come forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's kind of hard to provide documents that have been destroyed, Speaker; kind of hard.

Chris Bentley, the former Minister of Energy, yesterday claimed the reason the government's bogus cost number was different from that of the Auditor General's was because the ministry used a different way of counting costs. The Auditor General used standard accounting when he determined the cost of the Mississauga cancellation.

The Premier won't say whether she still believes the \$40-million figure for the Oakville cancellation is the one that in fact is true. Will the Premier tell us whether the \$40-million figure for Oakville was regular accounting or Liberal accounting?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member has the gall to ask that question. Yesterday, at the urging of the Minister of Energy and with the support of government members, we asked for a special session to bring the OPA forward, where they could answer a whole range of questions on this issue. That member voted against it.

In terms of the production of documents, let me share a quote from the member from Nipissing and what he told the committee yesterday. Listen to this: "You know the Premier reminds us every day that documents will continue to be turned over, and this is a reasonable request of timing of two weeks. We asked for that day after day after day we've been asking that, and"—listen to this—"have been wonderfully receiving these documents."

Mr. Speaker, we have been working in good faith to meet the committee's requirements. We have gone beyond it in terms of transparency. The opposition preach a good tune here, but they constantly put their hands up to vote against our motions.

1100

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, you've admitted the gas plant cancellations were political decisions, but at the justice committee, your former energy minister twice removed swore that it was because the power was no longer required. He also told the Toronto Star, "It won't be built anywhere in Ontario."

Premier, we've finally uncovered documents that tell us what really happened. This is from your justice ministry: "The government offered to make TransCanada whole by finding another gas plant from which it could make profits, and in return, TransCanada promised not to sue or otherwise embarrass the government." Now, Speaker, we're finally getting to the truth of why this new gas plant is being built.

Premier, did you spend all that taxpayer money just to save Liberal embarrassment?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, it's astonishing that they stand here and they ask questions for information, then they vote against the government motion to have the OPA come before the committee.

Last night, the Premier showed up in this Legislature to participate in a late show with the honourable member. He chose not to participate.

Tuesday morning, the government members asked that the Leader of the Opposition—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's good.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Government members requested the Leader of the Opposition to come before the committee, and do you know what the opposition did? The official opposition attempted to block that motion.

So perhaps in the supplementary, the honourable member will tell us—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The member from Simcoe-Grey, I'm trying to get somebody else on the other side. Give me a chance.

Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order, and especially when he's answering.

Finish.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, he will tell us, is the Leader of the Opposition going to play calendar on Tuesday, or will he be there to answer our questions?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Well, Speaker, if I wanted to see dancing like that, next time I'll buy a ticket to A Chorus Line.

Premier, as if your political motivations weren't enough, let's look at how the plant we didn't need was sited. Under sworn testimony, the former Premier's chief of staff told the justice committee that it was he who came up with the five replacement site options. His number one choice was in Napanee, hundreds of kilometres

from Oakville. I asked him what experience he had in siting energy plants and he said "none." He has no energy experience whatsoever.

Premier, given that Liberal logic, why didn't you just throw darts at a dartboard? You might have gotten a little closer to Oakville and saved the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I ask the Premier again, did you spend all of that taxpayer money just to save Liberal embarrassment?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's talk about political motivation. We've had tweets; we've had YouTube. I have here a Conservative Party pamphlet—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Rural Affairs will not put that up in the air again. If he does, he will be admonished.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I have here a Conservative Party pamphlet. You can tell it's a Conservative Party pamphlet because the Leader of the Opposition is nowhere to be seen on it, as is usually the case. But let me quote it, Mr. Speaker: "The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party. On October 6, vote Ontario PC. Elect Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan. Authorized by the CFO for the Etobicoke Centre Progressive Conservative Riding Association."

And he has the gall to talk about political overtones. The Progressive Conservative Party was 100% against—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## CANCER TREATMENT

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Yesterday we heard from Lakeridge Health, another hospital that was affected by the diluted chemotherapy drugs. Lakeridge had no idea that there was a grey area in regulation, and had they known, the process for securing those drugs would have been completely different. The hospital is taking its responsibility and doing everything it can to close the gaps in oversight.

My question is: Will the minister be as forthright and admit that she failed both hospitals and patients by failing to provide the necessary oversight?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, what I can tell you is that when I became aware of this situation, I took immediate and swift action. The first concern, of course, was for the patients affected, and I want to commend our hospitals for very quickly identifying the affected patients, reaching out to them, facilitating appointments with their oncologists and providing them with answers to their personal questions.

I then established a working group of all of the affected partners in this. I've appointed Dr. Jake Thiessen to lead an investigation of the cancer drug supply chain. I've posted regulations directing hospitals to purchase only from suppliers who are accredited. The College of



Pharmacists is developing a regulation to give them access that they need to these facilities.

I'm very pleased that Health Canada is now taking ownership as well. They are moving on this issue; they know this requires a national solution.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I guess the question is here: when she became aware. Why did it take so long to become aware? The grey area was first identified in 1997; this is 15 years ago. Since 2009, a policy document outlining the decision-making process between the two levels of government has been in place. Today we are learning that the problem does not exist in isolation but extends to some of the biggest players in the health care system.

Will the minister finally stop dodging responsibility, commit to doing her job, and close this gap in oversight?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I have done exactly that, and the member opposite knows that I have done exactly that. It is clear: This is a national problem. It requires a national solution. Even the federal minister acknowledges that this requires a national solution. Baxter is a company that supplies drugs to Ontario hospitals. It also supplies to hospitals right across the province.

We are doing our part. We are expanding the mandate of the College of Pharmacists. We are instructing hospitals to take this responsibility seriously. It's very important that if the member opposite has suggestions on what more we need to do, I would be most interested in hearing that.

I can assure the House that when I became aware of this, I acted immediately. I took the appropriate steps. If there's more that the member opposite thinks I need to do, I want to hear from her.

## MINING INDUSTRY

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Ontario is blessed to have a beautiful north rich with natural resources. It is important to preserve the natural beauty of the north, but at the same time it's also important to promote and ensure the sustainable development of natural resources. The process of such development must take into consideration the interests and aspirations of all stakeholders, for the benefit of all Ontarians.

Minister, will you inform this House about the modernizing of the Mining Act? How will it help the sustainable development of natural resources?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I want to thank the member from Mississauga—Brampton South for that great question. Certainly, we want to acknowledge the process of modernizing the Mining Act, a very important piece of legislation, and now the supporting regulations are part of a very extensive consultation process. In the two-year period between January 2010 and 2012, we held over 70 discussions and consultation sessions with aboriginal groups and communities, industry stakeholders, environ-

mental organizations and a series of municipal representatives.

One of our key stakeholders is the Ontario Mining Association. I want to share a quote from Chris Hodgson, the president of the OMA, who, members here will know, was previously Minister of Northern Development and Mines in the mid-1990s. Here's their quote:

"The Ontario Mining Association appreciates the consultative and focused approach to the development of the new Mining Act regulations. Ontario competes with other jurisdictions for mining investment, and a clearly defined regulatory environment is critical to ensuring the province continues as a mining leader."

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?  
1110

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Minister, it's great to hear that you have done commendable work to ensure meaningful changes to the Mining Act so that Ontario remains one of the best places in the world for mining exploration and mining investment.

Can the minister share with this House how modernizing the Mining Act will impact stakeholders, northern communities and economic growth?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Thank you again to the member for the question. One of our goals with the modernized Mining Act is to provide certainty and clarity, and encourage early engagement, obviously, and ongoing relationship-building with aboriginal communities. We've instituted a permanent, focused flow-through tax credit of 5% to encourage investment in mineral exploration and significant tax benefits for new or expanding mines, particularly for new mines in remote areas; and extended the Northern Industrial Energy Rate Program, a huge program—subject of course to annual program funding approval—which supports northern Ontario's largest industrial consumers in reducing energy costs, sustaining employment and maintaining the sector's global competitiveness.

We continue to invest in services such as geological mapping and the digitalization of geoscience information to help Ontario's mineral exploration sector identify areas of economic opportunity—a hugely important piece of legislation, and we're grateful for all the support—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday we reached a new low in the growing gas plant scandal. In an embarrassing spectacle at the justice committee, two former energy ministers played dumb rather than providing answers. Throw in the current minister, and the theme song for this debacle is Three Blind Mice.

Premier, I'm worried, not that performances like yesterday undermine your credibility—not that there's much left—but what worries me is investors seeing this cast of characters that this scandal has produced and questioning if Ontario is really a place to do business. Isn't it time to

stop playing this dangerous game with Ontario's future by finally showing some leadership and providing the real cost to cancel the Oakville plant?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Premier, just a moment, please.

I'm going to mention this: I'm not particularly impressed with the tone used. Although it did not use unparliamentary language, it is not the race to the top that I've been requesting. I would ask all questioners and people giving the answer that you consider that, please, to keep this place in good decorum.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know the government House leader will want to speak to the events at committee, but I really think that at this moment in our history in the province, it's very important that all parties work together. We're here in a minority Parliament. Unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition has said that his party is opposed to the budget before having read it, and I don't understand that way of doing politics, but that's what has been said.

I don't think that we should, as a Parliament, be intent on an unnecessary election. I think that we should be trying to work together. I would invite the member opposite to work with us. I would invite the party opposite to work with us. I think that's what the people of Ontario are looking for as we go into this budget. I would at least ask that the party opposite read the budget before they vote against it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Premier, here's how bad it is: The only one that seems to be making sense over there is the member for Mississauga—Streetsville, and last week people called him a space cadet.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Withdrawn.

I think he has finally come down from the clouds. I'm actually going to quote him. It's a quote from the Toronto Star. The member from Mississauga—Streetsville said, "It's our responsibility as a government if we've got" something new "to add that we add it as soon as we know it."

Premier, you know the true cost of the Oakville plant now. You just want to bring the OPA boss in to be your fall guy again. Well, the buck stops with you, Premier, not a bureaucrat. Will you take Mr. Delaney's advice and do something responsible and tell us the cost of the Oakville plant cancellation?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** This is absolutely outrageous. The government went forward yesterday—you want to talk about yesterday at committee? We went forward with a motion to have a special meeting where the OPA could come in and answer all the questions the opposition had; they voted against it.

We asked the Leader of the Opposition to come on Tuesday morning; they attempted to block it through a motion that we put forward. The Premier came to this

chamber last night for two late shows, and two of their members chose not to participate in them.

If anyone has an apology about what happened yesterday related to the gas plant file, it's the members of that party over there.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Last year, Hamilton fell in love with Nicole Cassavetes. This 14-year-old young woman and her family battled numerous hardships while Nicole awaited a heart transplant. Tragically, two weeks after the transplant, Nicole died.

Today is the first anniversary of Nicole's death. Her family is here today, speaking publicly about their year-long battle to get answers surrounding her treatment and passing at Sick Kids Hospital.

Why does this family have to go through such great lengths to get answers in our health care system? How can the minister help them today to get the answers they need?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member opposite. I would like to welcome family members here. This is a case that I am not familiar with. It would have been preferable had the member notified me of this case so I could have more information for the family. I would be more than happy to meet with the family after question period to understand what questions they have.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Nicole's family continues to be haunted by questions regarding her care. They have quietly worked through all the proper channels over the past year, but they still are without answers.

The buck needs to stop here, Minister. The existing oversight in our health care system is clearly failing Ontarians. For families like the Cassaveteses, having an independent third party to answer their questions and help guide them through would make a world of difference to them and many Ontarians.

Speaker, will this minister listen to the families like Nicole's and commit to Ombudsman oversight of our hospitals today?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** As I said in the first question, I will be more than happy to meet with the family after question period, and I can learn more about this situation and make sure that you get answers that you deserve.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** This question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, Ontario's small and rural hospitals are an integral part of the communities they serve. Not only are these hospitals vital for providing care in a timely, efficient fashion, but many Ontarians rely on their local hospitals to provide a wide variety of services. But there's no doubt people living in rural communities face some unique challenges. Ensuring our



small and rural hospitals continue to provide excellent care for all Ontarians is of critical importance.

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, could the minister please update the House on what our government is doing to strengthen our rural hospitals?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I thank the member from Ottawa–Orléans for his passionate advocacy on this issue. I can assure you that we are committed to those small and rural hospitals that are so important in their communities.

I was recently in Seaforth, where I was able to announce some of the projects that were being funded by a special \$20-million fund for small and rural hospitals. I was very impressed by the innovation, by the transformation that is under way in our small and rural—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Huron–Bruce, come to order, and the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I was extremely impressed by the innovation that was being demonstrated by these projects that will strengthen access to care in small and rural communities. We are determined to provide all Ontarians, no matter where they live, with access to the right care, at the right time, at the right place.

I was very pleased that four of the 23 new hospitals are in rural Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thank you, Minister, for your response. I'm glad to hear the new Ontario government takes the needs of small and rural hospitals seriously.

Improving and modernizing these hospitals is critical to ensuring they remain effective, efficient and accessible to the communities they serve. Providing access to the right care at the right time and in the right place supports Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care. It is part of the new Ontario government's effort to build a strong economy and a fair society for the benefit of all.

1120

I recently heard some good news about rural hospitals' funding in southwestern Ontario. Speaker, through you to the minister: What are some specific examples of efforts our government has undertaken to strengthen and improve small and rural hospitals in this part of the province?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member for his question. Of course, we know that rural communities have unique health care. That's why we're making important investments. Just this last Monday, I had the opportunity to visit Wingham on the west coast of Ontario, and Mount Forest. I experienced warm hospitality from the member from Huron–Bruce and the member from Perth–Wellington.

Our government is supporting renovations and improvements at the Wingham and District Hospital and the Waterloo Wellington LHIN. I was very pleased to join with the members—and I had a great lunch in Wingham at Grumpy's café. All the talk there that day was about the new Chinese investment for two casting plants in Wingham, Ontario. It was a good-news day to be in Wingham, Ontario.

We'll continue to make strategic investments in rural Ontario. That's what our new government is all about, and that's what we're doing each and every day.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, while the Premier was busy buying off the NDP, or, as they're now known, the Liberal farm team, the justice—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. First of all, sometimes it is hard to hear unparliamentary language because of all the chatter, and second of all, I got it. The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Withdrawn.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Finish your question, please.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** The justice committee heard from former energy ministers Duguid and Bentley. Given the continued evasion and selective amnesia of Liberal witnesses, it's not surprising that both of them denied having any knowledge of a \$712-million offer to TransCanada.

Speaker, we can accept that Minister Duguid may not have known since Premier McGuinty chose to cut him out, not trusting him with this file. What we can't accept, though, is that the Premier and the energy minister are as clueless as Minister Duguid.

The TransCanada negotiations went to cabinet. We know that. We also know that Premier Wynne was chair of cabinet. The Premier knows what it cost to cancel the Oakville plant, so why doesn't she just come clean right here, right now?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, it's beyond incredible. Government members yesterday put forward a plan where the OPA would appear in front of the committee to answer all the questions as technical as any member wanted, to go through the entire process by which these various plants were dealt with. They voted no. They're demanding answers from the Premier. She shows up for a late show last night; they don't participate.

We have some questions on this side of the House about the costing that the PC Party had when they put out pamphlets like the one that I quoted from earlier, and yet when we attempted to call the Leader of the Opposition, they tried to block it. Perhaps in the supplementary he will confirm to this Legislature whether the Leader of the Opposition will appear next Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. to answer our questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Speaker, back to the Premier: It must be difficult for the Liberal members to watch the Premier's credibility evaporate each and every passing day. And while the Liberal apologists in the NDP are willing to excuse any scandal, no matter how large or how egregious, as long as they get bought off, we in the PC caucus are determined to get answers—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, I've got to point it out before you do. The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Withdrawn.

Speaker, the gas plant scandal is knocking on the Premier's door. She was the chair of cabinet. Her name is on the documents. She was briefed on "buckets of costs." The Premier should save Minister Chiarelli the run down the hallway and save him the aggravation. Will she come clean and reveal the costs of the Oakville cancellation right here, right now?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, if you want to talk about knocking on someone's door, let's talk about the Leader of the Opposition, who made a YouTube video where he stood there with his adoring PC candidates in a crowd of five or six onlookers and said that if he was elected, it would be "done, done, done."

It was his candidate, Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan, who put out this pamphlet saying, "The only party that will"—underlined, Mr. Speaker—"stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party."

Again, why are all the honourable members over there failing to answer my very simple question? Next Tuesday morning, 8:30 a.m., will the Leader of the Opposition be there to answer questions? Later in the day, the Premier will be there to answer questions. We'd like the OPA to come forward, but they keep blocking it.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** To the Premier: It has been almost a year since the federal government decided to shut down the Experimental Lakes Area, a world-renowned site.

After much pressure from within Canada and across the globe, the Ontario government announced today that it has finally seen the light. It has finally seen the light. It has only taken a year. They finally realized and recognized the importance of keeping the ELA operational.

But your announcement didn't provide any details at all as to what funding it will put in place and what exactly you're willing to do to save the Experimental Lakes Area.

My question is straightforward: Is the deal final, and what commitment has your government made to ensure that this important site remains open?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am so pleased that the member opposite has asked this question. I think it is just fantastic. I know that she cares about this issue.

It was about a year ago that I was in Kenora and I met with Mayor Canfield. He was driving me around; we

were talking about bridges and roads. He talked to me about the Experimental Lakes Area. I was very concerned, because there was a question about whether it was going to survive. It is a federal project, as the member opposite knows.

So I am thrilled that we are stepping up to the plate, that we are going to work with the government of Manitoba, with the federal government, with the Institute for Sustainable Development, and we are going to come to an arrangement where this terrific and unique science endeavour will be able to go forward.

We know that the operating costs are up to \$2 million. We have said that we are going to support this. There are some details to be worked out in terms of capital costs. That's what the negotiation is about.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone in my riding and across Canada who stepped up and fought hard to keep the Experimental Lakes open. It was through their petitions, their town halls, their statements, debates in this House and press conferences across the world that this government has finally seen the light. This site is not about politics; it's about groundbreaking research. People are looking—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We're getting there. Just settle down. I would ask the Minister of the Environment to take a bit of a break.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** As I said, this site is not about politics; it's about groundbreaking research. People are looking to this provincial government for a real plan. This government is not providing the basic answers to some of the most important questions around the ELA.

People are desperate to know who will pay the operating costs, who will cover the liability and what steps have been taken to ensure this site will remain open permanently.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. No, no, they're the ones who did it. Be seated, please.

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I think it's a great day in Ontario when you see levels of government coming together to recognize the importance of the Experimental Lakes Area in Ontario, which is a gem and to which many scientists have come from all around the world to study important issues: climate change, and the impact of pollution on our water. A whole variety of important scientific experiments have taken place there for so many years.

What our Premier said today is that we would work with our partners, such as IISD, the federal government, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the ministries in Manitoba, that all have a role to play. I think what you're seeing is a collaborative approach of coming together to say we all have a stake in this important invest-



ment that has been there so many years. There are ongoing discussions right now. We look forward to working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to make this a reality.

### RETIREMENT HOMES

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My question is for the minister responsible for seniors. Every day, many seniors in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River consider moving into a retirement home as they enter a new chapter in their life.

Seniors want a place where they feel comfortable and accepted. They want a place where they are cared for and treated with respect, and their families want to ensure their safety. It is important that residents feel safe and are protected in their new accommodations.

1130

With the concerns of seniors and their families in mind, can the minister please tell us what our government has done to protect those who decide to live in a retirement home in Ontario?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** My thanks to the member from Scarborough–Rouge River. It is indeed a very good question. It reflects the genuine concern of the member himself, and mine and that of the government as well.

For many seniors, a retirement home is a place where they may be spending the rest of their best years. Therefore, in 2010, our government took action and passed the Retirement Homes Act, the first such legislation in Ontario. The act sets very clear guidelines and levels of care that our seniors should be receiving and are entitled to receive in retirement home living.

The act provides safety, comfort and peace of mind not only for the residents themselves but for the family members. We will continue to see that indeed they will receive such care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** This is great news for our seniors. Many of our seniors are not fully aware of how the Retirement Homes Act offers protection or benefits to them. At times, many seniors and families are concerned about potential safety issues, but I know our government has taken strong action to keep seniors safe in Ontario. It is important that seniors are provided with the information on how the Retirement Homes Act protects their rights, safety and standard of living.

Can the minister now tell us and all seniors across Ontario how this act will be enforced, and also, what are the benefits to them?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Speaker, through you to the member and to all our seniors in our province, let me say that the Retirement Homes Act legislates strong protection for seniors. It created the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority, an independent body that conducts its own random investigations and inspections; oversees compliance and enforcement; mandates the level of care and safety standards, emergency plans and training for staff; and much more.

For the first time in Ontario, there is a public registry for retirement homes, and as of July 1, 2012, all retirement homes, in order to continue to operate in Ontario, must indeed apply for a licence.

These are positive changes that are helping seniors live in a safe, secure environment and continue to enjoy years of fulfillment and meaningful life.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My question is to the Premier. Last Monday, the Auditor General reported that the Ontario Power Authority paid Greenfield \$41 million in labour costs that Greenfield had incurred between 2004 and 2012. However, the Auditor General also tells us this amount was paid with no supporting documentation: no copies of payroll, no T4s, no other information.

My question for the Premier is, is it not common practice to require this kind of documentation, or can any company provide blanked-out charges on invoices and receive money from the government to pay employees?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, the opposition is asking for detailed answers to a variety of issues related to the gas plant. Yesterday, government members went forward with a motion asking that the OPA come forward for a special session where they'd be able to cast light, I'm sure, on many of the issues that have been raised today. Do you know what happened, Mr. Speaker? They voted against it.

Last night, the Premier came to this chamber to participate in a late show, and two of the members that had called for it over there chose not to participate.

You can't have it both ways. You can't come here every day and ask detailed questions and then, when the government tries to provide those opportunities—we go before the committee and offer a government-wide search of documents, and that member's party votes against it. They can't have it both ways.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Back to the Premier, and I hope you'll be able to answer for me on this question: This past Monday, a week after the Auditor General released his report on the cost of the power plant, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing responded to a question regarding reimbursement costs in Thunder Bay. She said, "I plan to be in Thunder Bay later this week to talk with the mayor and councillors to make sure that we have the receipts that we need because at the end of the day we have an Auditor General" we're responsible to. "We have to provide the paperwork, but we want to be there to help that community."

Why does the Liberal government need receipts to help flood victims but not for the relocation and costs of our power plants?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** The Auditor General was a witness before the committee last week and had a chance to address many of these issues, and we offered to go farther by having the Ontario Power Authority come forward for a special session today. First, the opposition voted against it. Then they attempted to block our efforts to have the Leader of the Opposition come before the committee. We're going to have the Premier there next Tuesday. She has committed to it. But what we want to know is, is the Leader of the Opposition going to play calendar? He's too busy to come forward to talk about his strong support for the cancellation of the gas plants and why in the last election he so strongly promised to talk about his analysis that was done—his costing was done.

I am waiting for a member of the opposition to stand up and confirm that he will be there to explain why he went forward with such strong support for the cancellation.

#### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. Minister, along with my colleague the member for Timiskaming, we met about a month ago to talk about the state of the highways in northern Ontario and about how the winter road maintenance that is going on right now is quite frankly substandard and full of highway closures. I'm going to have a page come over here and sent to show you the picture that was taken yesterday on Highway 11 outside of Hearst. The road there was closed, Minister, when there should have never been a closure. It's not as if it never snowed in northern Ontario. What's wrong is the standards to which those contractors are being held to maintain the highways are lesser than they were when the Ministry of Transportation used to do them. You said you were going to look into this matter. Why are highways still being closed on moderate snowstorms in northern Ontario?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I'm quite happy to answer. I want to thank the member for the question and I also want to thank both him and his colleague for working with us on this issue.

As the member knows, the standards have not changed.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** That's the problem.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** No, no. I appreciate the concern. I want to say that I do believe this is a very sincere concern, one that I share. We are looking at ways—and I've taken the advice of the members opposite—on how we can improve those standards. We are working very closely on that right now. We're reviewing that with the regions. I will be up, actually, tomorrow meeting with mayors in northwestern Ontario and talking about this very issue, and I will continue in my supplementary to give a more full answer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, Minister, clearly this is showing that your privatization initiative isn't working. You're trying to get contractors to maintain a highway to a lesser standard than we used to ourselves when we used to maintain those highways. It's not as if, as I said earlier, it doesn't snow in northern Ontario; it's been snowing for centuries in northern Ontario. The difference is we used to be able to get the highways plowed.

So, I'm going to ask you again: Will you reverse the decision of your government to privatize, or at the very least increase the standards in those contracts so we can drive on those highways and not see closures like we did yesterday?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** This is a continuing conversation that I've had with mayors who have said that their own snow removal this year was particularly problematic because of the nature of the mix of precipitation and the challenges that they had. This wasn't unique to the Ontario situation. There are different weather patterns and there are different challenges, very seriously. That is part of it.

I've also said to you, very seriously, that I think we could do a better job there, and you've given this government some suggestions, which we are taking very seriously. I will look into this particular matter. I thank the member for it. I am again taking this review very seriously. I will be back in northern Ontario literally tomorrow, and I look forward to continuing the conversation with the member opposite, and I appreciate his sincerity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

The member for Simcoe—Grey on a point of order.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker: I want to welcome to the Legislature today Mr. Keith Currie, a director of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The member from Nipissing on a point of order.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I rise on a point of order. While I intended to be at the late show last night, I was sadly at the sideshow, the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's enough. Be seated. That's not a point of order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You know, just because question period is over doesn't mean that I lose authority.

The member from Newmarket—Aurora on a point of order.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Yes, Speaker, on a point of order: I want to extend my apologies to the Premier for not being here last night. There was an error in my scheduling. I'm willing to reschedule that for tomorrow evening if the Premier is willing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's another way to do it.

The Minister of Finance on a point of order.



## ONTARIO BUDGET

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Yes, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to make a formal announcement to the House that I will be tabling the 2013 budget on Thursday, May 2, at 4 p.m.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That is a point of order.

## DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before we recess, I do have a comment to make, and I would really appreciate no comments. I'm going to say this as—somewhat sorry and frustrating, and at times sad, that members are taking to personal insults or commenting on individuals. I'm going to ask and challenge us that this does not help this place, our reputation and what we stand for. I'm going to ask you as honourable members, which I treat all of you as, to avoid the personal comments, the insults or the comments about anyone's attendance. I think we can do better, and I'm asking us all to do that.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1142 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce today Furakh Mir, chair and president of Meningitis Relief Canada, as well as Sarbjit Kaur. Please welcome them to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you, and welcome.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## WORLD MENINGITIS DAY

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, it's my pleasure to rise today to recognize World Meningitis Day.

Meningitis appears suddenly and can be fatal within just 24 to 48 hours. It often goes undetected at first, because its symptoms resemble the flu. Tragically, about 1,000 Canadians will die from meningitis this year, most of them young people, and many who survive will face long-term disability such as neurological damage, hearing loss or limb amputation.

I'd like to recognize Ms. Furakh Mir and her organization, Meningitis Relief Canada, for all of the work that they have done to raise awareness and to provide support to affected families. I'd also like to thank the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton, who will be introducing the Meningitis Awareness Day Act here today, which would recognize April 24 of each year as World Men-

ingitis Day in this province. This recognition is a simple gesture that would greatly increase public awareness.

This is an important cause, and I know that many of my colleagues in this Legislature support it. I am particularly affected by this, having had one of my own young children suffer from encephalitis, which is very closely related to meningitis. Thankfully, he survived and is flourishing. But I can say, on behalf of everyone who has suffered or seen a loved one suffer from this potentially deadly disease, that you're really making a difference. Thank you very much for all of the efforts of your organization.

## ORGAN DONATION

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'd like to highlight two individuals—heroes of our community, really—who have dedicated their lives to saving others. My friend 10-year-old Kaidyn Blair was an organ recipient at the tender age of one. His life was saved by someone whose selfless act to become a donor gave Kaidyn the chance to live, and live he has. It has been 3,654 days since Kaidyn's transplant, and he is celebrating his 10-year liver anniversary by encouraging one person to be a registered donor for each day since his April 27, 2003, transplant. So far, Kaidyn has encouraged 243 people to register, and I'm confident he will reach his goal.

Also, it was one year ago Friday that Chrissy Klassen literally gave a part of herself to ensure another would live. The 24-year-old gave up a quarter of her liver so that a nine-month-old local baby girl could survive. She learned about the need through a Facebook page that the girl's mother had devoted to finding a suitable donor for her ailing daughter. Three months later, she was accepted, and as far as she knows, the baby, now a toddler, is thriving.

I highlight these stories because there continues to be a great need in our province for organ donation. One of those waiting is two-year-old Emily Ledoux. At five weeks old, she was diagnosed with the same condition that Kaidyn had, biliary atresia. Like Kaidyn Blair and Chrissy Klassen, I'm certain more Ontarians will choose to make that special gift of life. I urge all eligible Ontarians to visit [beadonor.ca](http://beadonor.ca) and to fill out your donor card. It only takes a couple of minutes to ensure that your life could save another.

## ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I rise today to mark the 98th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. April 24, 1915, marked the start of a planned and systematic campaign to eradicate the Armenian people. On that date, 250 Armenian intellectuals and community leaders were arrested in Constantinople, and from then on, Armenians were uprooted from their homes and force-marched for hundreds of miles into isolated and deserted lands while being deprived of food and water. Few had little hope of survival.

The tragic and brutal deaths that resulted set the world stage for other genocides and human tragedies. In fact, Adolf Hitler noted to his aides that the world would not even lift a finger for those of Jewish heritage because, in his words, "Who today remembers the Armenians?"

This past weekend, members of all levels of government, from all political stripes, were present at the Armenian Community Centre in North York to commemorate the 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children who were massacred.

Speaker, I applaud the Armenian community's efforts to acknowledge their past, while working with other Canadians to build a future based on mutual respect. They have made a significant and enriching contribution to my community of Vaughan and to our entire province and country. I offer my sincerest condolences to the families as they mourn the lives that were lost. Let us keep all of our friends of Armenian heritage in our thoughts today as we work together to prevent terrible tragedies like this from ever happening again.

#### FLOODING IN BANCROFT

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Like the members from Parry Sound–Muskoka, Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock and Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, I have constituents who are fighting to deal with the terrible aftermath of the flooding in the central and eastern Ontario regions.

I was in Bancroft on Friday, attending community events, as the flood waters began to rise on the York River. By the time I left the town on Friday night, water levels were already perilously high.

Over the course of the weekend, sections of Highway 62 and Highway 28 were washed out as the river rose over its embankment. These highways are major arteries leading in and out of North Hastings. Many residents of Bancroft, McArthur Mills and Maynooth use these highways as routes to the hospitals in Peterborough and Belleville in the event a condition is too critical for the smaller hospital in Bancroft.

Community leaders in Bancroft have done an outstanding job responding to the emergency in the community. Special recognition should be made to Bancroft Fire Chief Pat Hoover and Mayor Bernice Jenkins for their efforts in the community over the weekend. Schools in Bancroft are still closed today, and they've remained closed since the flooding began.

Bancroft has continually found its small tax base stretched to the limit recently with the increased cost of policing. The damage caused by this week's events will only further put a strain on already overburdened taxpayers there.

I want to again thank Mayor Jenkins and Chief Hoover for their efforts and all volunteers from the town and neighbouring municipalities who came in to fill up sandbags and keep the flood waters at bay. Let's get some help for Bancroft.

#### WALLY MOLE

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I'm pleased to rise today in the Legislature to recognize a very special individual in the city of Welland receiving our community's top sports honour as a lifetime achievement award. Wally Mole, an 86-year-old Welland native, a friend, a retired realtor, was presented with the H.L. Cudney Sportsman of the Year Award at the 41st annual Welland Sports Promotion Committee banquet on April 5.

Wally has spent 12 years working as the chair and behind the scenes to maintain the Welland Sports Wall of Fame at the local Seaway Mall. He is a true volunteer in every sense of the word, putting thousands of hours in to ensure the Welland Sports Wall of Fame continues to recognize Welland sports heroes.

Volunteers are what keep so many sporting events going in our community and have such a positive impact on our young people and sports overall in the city. I can safely say that without people like Wally Mole, there would be no such sports celebrations. His tireless work is invaluable and deeply appreciated. He didn't do this for accolades or recognition; he did it for the love of sports and his community.

I commend the Welland Sports Tourism Alliance and the Sports Promotion Committee in choosing Wally as the Sportsman of the Year in Welland. It's a well-deserved recognition, and my congratulations to Wally—a job well done.

#### WORLD MENINGITIS DAY

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I rise today to tell you about one mother's fight to raise awareness of a very important issue. Ms. Furakh Mir is a mother from Brampton. I believe she's here in the gallery. Several years ago her baby boy, Sulayman, became ill. The local hospital and walk-in clinic both said it was nothing serious, but she knew—her mother's instinct told her—that something was very wrong with her son, so she took him to SickKids, where he was diagnosed with bacterial meningitis. He was treated and, thankfully, recovered.

This is Furakh Mir's story, but it could be anyone's. The fact is that bacterial meningitis can strike without warning. Unlike most diseases we can think of, this one actually affects mostly children and teenagers. Some who get it can face permanent disability; some will even die if not caught in time. The public, and even health care professionals, simply aren't aware of the symptoms of this disease.

Her experience has inspired Furakh Mir to found the registered charity Meningitis Relief Canada. She now dedicates her time and effort to raising awareness around meningitis, and supporting individuals and families affected by this terrible disease.

#### 1510

I rise today on World Meningitis Day to commend everyone who has worked so hard for this worthy cause. I also know that my colleague across the floor the MPP for



Bramalea-Gore-Malton will be introducing a bill later today to recognize World Meningitis Day, and I will support it.

### ROBOTICS TEAM

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** On the weekend of April 4 to 6, Burlington residents took special pride in the results of the Pine Tree Regional Robotics Competition in Lewiston, Maine. Competing against a slate of high school robotic teams from around the world and before a crowd of thousands, Burlington Central High School's robotics team became regional champions for the first time in the school's history. The team had a 17th place showing in qualification rounds and was selected by two Maine teams to join up as a trio, powering through elimination rounds and closing with a thrilling gold medal win.

To anyone who follows the team, that shouldn't come as a total shock. Last year, the school picked up a second place and a third in Canadian and US competitions, and the team's commitment is bone deep. They put countless hours of work into constructing the robot making for many late nights and early mornings.

Central also has a strong program in advance manufacturing; great hometown partners in the Eaton Group, Thomson-Gordon Group and BMP Metals; and an outstanding mentor in teacher Chris Arnold.

The team now advances to the FIRST Robotics World Championship in St. Louis, Missouri, from April 24 to 27, where they will be among 300 teams competing.

This is my son's school, Mac McKenna, so this is an extra shout-out to that. Go Trojans!

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Never try to down a Trojan.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I would like to take this opportunity to share with the House a story of love, care and hope. The story was conveyed to me by John Birks on behalf of his parents, Catherine and Lt. Hugh Birks, who were recently honoured by the Brampton Guardian as the longest-married couple in Brampton for their 67 years of a happy and peaceful married life. Catherine and Lt. Birks, congratulations.

Their son John wrote, "My father is 95 years old. They both still live 'at home'...."

"We have been extremely fortunate to have experienced the very best of the health care system. My parents are (relatively) healthy considering their age, but, as should be anticipated, some health-related challenges do develop with lightning speed. Our experiences with the staff at Peel Memorial/Brampton Civic hospitals have been entirely positive, as have been the rapid and capable responses of 911 emergency responses.

"Perhaps we have the best of each world, relatively healthy geriatrics, an educated, observant caregiver ... and an outstanding health care service...."

"They are a shining example of things going 'right' in our province."

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of our government's record and its continued efforts to the delivery of health care that all Ontarians deserve.

### COMMUNITY AWARDS

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** In this great province of ours, we all know of people who have gone beyond what is generally expected to make a real difference. It may be in the business that they've started or operate today and the dividends it returns to the community, or the people who have given hours and hours of their limited time back to the communities.

At this time, I wish to take this opportunity to recognize some of the residents of my riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry who, through their hard work, business initiative and the spirit of service to their peers, have made a huge difference in our community.

When I was mayor of South Glengarry, we initiated a special night each year to honour and thank the special community leaders. Last Saturday at the 8th Annual South Glengarry Business and Community Awards, the following awards of recognition were handed out. The Youth Merit Award went to Allister MacDonell. The Community Service Award went to the Friends of the Ruins St. Raphaels. Peter and Louise Sommers of Newbrabant Farms received the Excellence in Agriculture Award. Sangster's Sons Merchant general store was recognized as the Business of the Year. Robyn Denis of Auld Kirktown received the Entrepreneur of the Year award. The South Glengarry Citizen of the Year Award went to Anne Donkers as a recognized long-time volunteer in many local groups, including the Lancaster Optimist Club.

Also last week, I was pleased to attend the South Stormont Volunteer Appreciation Night, where the township gathered more than 100 of their very deserving volunteers. The highlight of the night was the recognition of Sandra Donnelly as the recipient of the Fran Laflamme Volunteer of the Year Award for countless hours given to the community.

It's important to recognize these people in our communities who truly make such a difference, and I salute them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Clark assumes ballot item number 30 and Ms. Elliott assumes ballot item number 26.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### BIRTHPLACE OF THE NATIONAL FLAG OF CANADA ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LE BERCEAU DU DRAPEAU NATIONAL DU CANADA

Mr. Clark moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 57, An Act to recognize Brockville as the birthplace of the National Flag of Canada / Projet de loi 57, Loi visant à reconnaître Brockville comme étant le berceau du drapeau national du Canada.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm just going to quote from the preamble for a bit, with your indulgence.

On February 15, 1965, the national flag of Canada was raised for the first time on Parliament Hill.

Canadians today share a tremendous sense of pride for our national flag, and the maple leaf has become symbolic around the world for the values of freedom and tolerance Canada represents. The journey from design to a place in the hearts of Canadians was difficult, and its successes can be attributed to a plan devised in the city of Brockville.

To survive the Great Flag Debate, we needed a champion, and the Honourable John Ross Matheson, MP for Leeds county, was that champion. He was chosen by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson to be the chair of the flag committee, and Matheson suggested that the role of project manager would have been a better fit. Working long hours, many from his home on North Augusta Road in Brockville, Matheson developed the strategy to ensure the maple leaf design was on the final selection board of that panel.

With that, Speaker, I'll just end my remarks.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As the member knows, we always accept reading from the explanatory notes. That's very good.

### MENINGITIS AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LE JOUR DE LA SENSIBILISATION À LA MÉNINGITE

Mr. Singh moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 58, An Act to proclaim Meningitis Awareness Day / Projet de loi 58, Loi proclamant le Jour de la sensibilisation à la méningite.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Mr. Speaker, meningitis is a very serious infection caused by the inflammation of the lining around the brain and spinal cord. Ten per cent of those who contract this disease will die, and those who do survive are often left suffering permanent disabilities for the rest of their lives.

**1520**

Because the symptoms are so similar to those of the flu, it can be easily overlooked or dismissed. Too many families have been devastated by meningitis infections, and it's largely due to a lack of awareness. This bill will help Ontario families get awareness and support that they need to raise awareness of this potentially deadly and preventable disease.

I thank the member from Whitby—Oshawa for indicating her support. This is a bill that I would gladly allow the government to take over, and that I encourage the government to take over, so we can ensure that April 24 is proclaimed Meningitis Awareness Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I also suspect that was read specifically from the explanatory notes. That's good.

Introduction of bills? Motions? Statements by ministries? It is now time for petitions from Durham.

## PETITIONS

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I cherish the simple honour of being a member. I cherish the honour of a simple petition here, representing my riding of Durham.

The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas Hydro One Networks Inc. (Hydro One) is proposing construction of a new transformer station on a 100-acre site in Clarington, near the Oshawa-Clarington boundary;

"Whereas the site is on the Oak Ridges moraine/greenbelt;

"Whereas concerns have been raised about the environmental impacts of this development, including harm to wildlife as well as contamination of ponds, streams and the underground water supply;

"Whereas sites zoned for industrial and/or commercial use are the best locations for large" electrical transformers;

"Whereas most, if not all, residents do not agree this project is needed and that, if proven to be necessary, it could be ... accommodated at alternative locations such as Cherrywood or Wesleyville;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask that the Ontario Legislature support the preservation of the Oak Ridges moraine, the greenbelt and the natural environment at this site. We also ask that the Ontario Legislature require the Clarington transformer station to be built at an alternative location zoned for an industrial facility and selected in



accordance with the best planning” and environmental principles.

I’m pleased to sign it, support it and present it to Addison, one of the pages here.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** “Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with developmental and other related disabilities; and

“Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs, developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

“Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

“Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

“Whereas in some cases services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a ‘custodial’ care arrangement; and

“Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

“Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential supports, day program supports and other programs province-wide;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have in effect been cut;

“(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

“(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce;

“(4) To provide adequate new funding to agencies to ensure that the growing number of families on wait lists have access to accommodation supports and day supports and services.”

I couldn’t agree more. I will sign this and give it to Madelyn to be delivered to the table.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Petitions. The member from—let’s see; so many. Oh, I’m sorry. I missed Kevin—the member from Oakville.

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** No problem. Thank you, Speaker. I’ve got a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It says:

“Whereas the agri-food industry is now and has historically been one of the primary economic drivers in Ontario; and

“Whereas the people of Ontario support local processors and producers in Ontario through purchasing and consuming locally grown and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and processed food products; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario farmers and Ontario food producers by leading by example; and

“Whereas the province of Ontario celebrates local Ontario producers and processors and promotes the good things grown, harvested and made in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 36, the Local Food Act.”

I agree with this. I will sign it and send it down with Jack.

#### ALGONQUIN LAND CLAIM

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the preliminary agreement in principle draft for the Algonquin land claim includes Foy Provincial Park. If this land is transferred to the Algonquins of Ontario it may no longer be accessible to the general public;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To permanently protect Foy Provincial Park. The MNR website states that ‘Ontario’s provincial parks and conservation reserves are dedicated to the people of Ontario and visitors for their inspiration, education, health, recreational enjoyment and other benefits with the intention that these areas shall be managed to maintain their ecological integrity and to leave them unimpaired for future generations.’

“Please remove Foy Provincial Park from the Algonquin land claim.”

It is signed by hundreds of people from my constituency. I will affix my signature to it and send it down with Annie.

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I have a petition here from the good people up in Manitouwadge, who are presenting this petition:

“Whereas northern Ontario will suffer a huge loss of service as a result of government cuts to ServiceOntario counters;

"Whereas these cuts will have a negative impact on local businesses and local economies;

"Whereas northerners will now face challenges in accessing their birth certificates, health cards and licences;

"Whereas northern Ontario should not unfairly bear the brunt of decisions to slash operating budgets;

"Whereas, regardless of address, all Ontarians should be treated equally by their government;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Review the decision to cut access to ServiceOntario for northerners, and provide northern Ontarians equal access to these services."

I will sign my name to it and present this to page Madelyn.

### INDUSTRIE AGROALIMENTAIRE

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** J'ai une pétition adressée à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que l'industrie agroalimentaire est maintenant, comme elle l'a toujours été historiquement, une force de l'économie ontarienne; et

« Attendu que les Ontariens et Ontariennes soutiennent les producteurs et transformateurs locaux en Ontario à travers l'achat et la consommation de fruits, légumes et viandes d'origine locale; et

« Attendu que le gouvernement de l'Ontario et la première ministre de l'Ontario soutiennent, entre autres, les fermiers et producteurs alimentaires ontariens; et

« Attendu que la province de l'Ontario célèbre ses producteurs et transformateurs locaux en Ontario et encourage la production alimentaire locale dans la province ontarienne;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à ce que l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario passe et promulgue le projet de loi 36, la Loi sur les aliments locaux. »

### FISHING REGULATIONS

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary is printed each year by the Ministry of Natural Resources and distributed to recreational fishermen throughout the province to inform them of all the relevant seasons, limits, licence requirements and other regulations; and

"Whereas this valuable document is readily available for anglers to keep in their residence, cottage, truck, boat, trailer or on their person to be fully informed of the current fishing regulations; and

"Whereas the MNR has recently and abruptly drastically reduced the distribution of the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary such that even major licence issuers and large fishing retailers are limited to one case of regulations per outlet; and

### 1530

"Whereas anglers do not always have access to the Internet to view online regulations while travelling or in remote areas;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately return the production of the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary to previous years' quantities such that all anglers have access to a copy and to distribute them accordingly."

I affix my signature in full support.

### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas currently the law takes the onus off of owners that raise violent dogs by making it appear that violence is a matter of genetics; and

"Whereas the Dog Owners' Liability Act does not clearly define a pit bull, nor is it enforced equally across the province, as pit bulls are not an acknowledged breed;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly passes Bill 16, Public Safety Related to Dogs Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011, into law."

I sign this on behalf of the over 1,000 dogs that have been killed just because of the way they look, not because of what they've done, and I'm going to give it to Glory to be delivered to the table.

### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support it, and I will give it to Madeline.



## WORKPLACE INSURANCE

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas, beginning on January 1, 2013, the WSIB was expanded to include groups of employers and principals who had previously been exempt from the WSIB and had private insurance; and

“Whereas this new financial burden does nothing to improve worker safety and only drives up the cost of doing business in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to repeal the statutory obligations created by Bill 119.”

I approve and I sign my name to it and give it to page Jack.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the McGuinty”—Wynne—“government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I agree with this petition, I sign my name and give it to page Callum.

## ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough’s oldest and most well-established community; and

“Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

“Whereas historically Agincourt’s electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

“Whereas communities, such as Scarborough–Agincourt, with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

“Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to

redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

“Whereas ‘community of interest’ is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

“Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

“Whereas the commission’s report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

“Whereas the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough–Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401.”

I agree with this, will sign it and send it down with Glory.

SERVICES FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas families are concerned about proposed changes to the Special Services at Home Program (SSAH) and the Passport Program under the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act (2008); and

“Whereas the system should allow for the seamless transfer of benefits to the Passport Program when the person turns 18 years of age, and not the current unacceptable cancellation of benefits and reapplication process that puts the person with an intellectual disability on a huge waiting list for months for the re-establishment of their benefits; and

“Whereas on September 20, 2012, the Legislature passed a motion by Progressive Conservative MPP Christine Elliott to immediately strike a select committee to develop a comprehensive developmental services strategy for Ontarians that addresses the needs of children, youth and adults in Ontario with an intellectual disability or who are dually diagnosed with an intellectual disability and a mental illness;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“The government immediately strike a select committee to develop a comprehensive developmental services strategy for Ontarians that addresses the needs of children, youth and adults in Ontario with an intellectual disability or who are dually diagnosed with an intellectual disability and a mental illness and coordinates the delivery of developmental programs and services across many provincial ministries;

"To declare a moratorium on any changes until the select committee reports back to the Legislature and its recommendations are acted upon."

I agree with this and will be signing it and passing it off to page Theodore.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SECURITY FOR COURTS, ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITIES AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA SÉCURITÉ DES TRIBUNAUX, DES CENTRALES ÉLECTRIQUES ET DES INSTALLATIONS NUCLÉAIRES

Mr. Meilleur moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 51, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013 / Projet de loi 51, Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics, modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers en ce qui concerne la sécurité des tribunaux et édictant la Loi de 2013 sur la sécurité des centrales électriques et des installations nucléaires.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Minister.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member from Scarborough—Agincourt.

I rise today to talk about security and civil rights, and about how we balance the two when it comes to protecting Ontario's courthouses, electricity generating plants and nuclear facilities. Striking that balance is the intent of the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013, which, if passed, will repeal and replace the Public Works Protection Act. Simply put, the time has come to modernize the legal framework under which we protect our courthouses and critical infrastructure such as nuclear and electricity generating facilities.

The Public Works Protection Act, or PWPA, was passed at the outset of the Second World War. In 1939, fears of Nazi saboteurs disrupting and destroying water and power plants, dams, roads and bridges motivated our predecessors in this Legislature to enact the PWPA.

We have seen this week that there are still people who would like to attack our way of life, but we have also seen that we have measures in place to protect our way of life. We face different realities today than we did more than 70 years ago when the PWPA was introduced, and we have modern tools to deal with these realities. We also have different expectations. We live in an open and democratic society where balancing civil liberties with the protection of critical infrastructure is an important debate. We welcome that debate, but at the same time we

must act. We must act so that we can fulfill our mandate to ensure that Ontario's nuclear and electricity generating facilities, as well as the Ontarians who live near them, are adequately protected, and we must act so that we can respond to legitimate criticisms made about the PWPA.

**1540**

Vous vous souviendrez que les clauses de la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics ont récemment été appliquées. Juste avant le sommet du G20 en juin 2010, la police de Toronto avait demandé d'utiliser les dispositions de la loi afin de protéger le périmètre de sécurité autour de la réunion.

There was uncertainty and vagueness associated with the PWPA that was highlighted as a result of its use during the G20. Later in 2010, the Ombudsman, Monsieur André Marin, produced a report that raised important questions about how the PWPA works and how it was used during the G20.

Also, our government asked Justice McMurtry to review the scope and appropriateness of the PWPA and to provide recommendations. The report recommended that the PWPA be repealed after Ontario had considered potential policy and security gaps as a result of its repeal.

In response to Mr. McMurtry's report, the government committed to consult publicly on replacement legislation that would repeal the PWPA. Clearly, there was a need for us to act and, as a result, we introduced the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act. In his review of the PWPA, Monsieur McMurtry found the definition of "public works" to be too broad.

One of the things we needed to define more clearly, following the report, was what should be included in the proposed legislation. The replacement legislation is more focused and builds on the current uses of the PWPA for security at courthouses, nuclear facilities and large electricity generating facilities. The Ombudsman's report also helped guide how we would replace the PWPA.

Dans son rapport, l'ombudsman, M. André Marin, a conclu que ce règlement adopté à la demande de la police de Toronto n'était pas justifié dans notre société moderne. En particulier, l'ombudsman se demande pourquoi la population ontarienne n'a pas été informée de l'adoption du règlement qui donnait des pouvoirs qui ne sont pas utilisés fréquemment dans notre province.

Monsieur Speaker, we have listened to both Mr. McMurtry and Monsieur Marin, and we have listened to all our partners from across the political spectrum.

It's important to note that Bill 51, which will repeal and replace the PWPA, includes government and opposition amendments. It's new, so we have amendments. These were agreed to during last year's review of the proposed legislation by the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. All key stakeholders were consulted, and all key stakeholders support the legislation.

Bill 51 incorporates feedback from our partners, in particular when it comes to religious accommodation at courthouses. The proposed legislation also includes minor technical changes, making explicit that the bill



does not affect the judiciary right of access to courthouses.

Our proposed legislation and associated regulation identified the narrow categories of infrastructure that are protected under it. Any changes to the act would be subject to legislative debate. This is because an amendment would be needed to add other types of facilities that could be protected under our proposed legislation. We have made the process open, transparent and accountable.

Bien des choses ont changé en Ontario depuis la Deuxième Guerre mondiale et l'adoption de la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics. La loi est désuète. Elle n'est plus nécessaire dans son cadre juridique actuel, même si certaines de ses mesures sont encore utilisées, comme je viens de le dire.

It's important to note, as Justice McMurtry did, that other laws exist to help keep our critical infrastructure secure. The Criminal Code gives the police powers to deal with breaches of the peace and riots. Common law gives the police important powers to preserve the peace and protect life and property. The Ontario Trespass to Property Act is also a potential source of police powers to arrest without warrant those who are unlawfully on certain premises or who were recently unlawfully on those premises. In addition, our Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act allows an emergency order to be put in place to restrict travel and movement to and from specific areas in the event of a declared provincial emergency. Finally, regulations under the Police Services Act mandate police services to put in place procedures consistent with plans to deal with acts of terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, you can see that more specific and modern legislation has made the PWPA outdated and unnecessary. Many large cultural, sporting and political gatherings are secured regularly by police without invoking the PWPA. Police rely on the Police Services Act, the Criminal Code and other legislation to effectively protect the people of this province.

Un principe constant dans nos efforts pour abroger et remplacer la loi a été d'écouter nos partenaires. À cette fin, nous avons rencontré et discuté avec des Ontariens et Ontariennes et des groupes qui nous ont aidés dans notre décision.

We have consulted widely with municipalities, civil liberty advocates, the police, and representatives from the nuclear sector, electricity producers and court security.

1550

From the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, we heard that any new powers should be tailored to address unique security threats that arise within the nuclear security context, and that these powers should be clearly articulated and communicated to the public. Mr. Speaker, this legislation addresses the concerns of the CCLA.

Bill 51 also looks at the issues surrounding the security of Ontario's courthouses.

La nouvelle loi établit des pouvoirs nécessaires pour assurer la sécurité dans les palais de justice et précise les amendements à la Loi sur les services policiers qui doivent être apportés. Le projet de loi tient aussi en

compte les questions entourant les accommodements de nature religieuse qui ont été soulevées par nos partenaires l'an dernier.

From the energy sector, we heard that the operators of nuclear installations and electricity generating facilities would like to maintain the ability to appoint peace officers for the purpose of protecting a nuclear facility. I'll provide more details on the powers given by the proposed legislation in a few minutes, but let me say that we agree with our partners from the energy sector on that issue.

We also listened to Justice McMurtry. With this proposed legislation, we are meeting our commitment to repeal the PWPA and implement key recommendations of the McMurtry report. In particular, we are repealing the Public Works Protection Act, setting out a legislative amendment to the Police Services Act to address court security, and introducing stand-alone legislation respecting security at prescribed energy generating and nuclear facilities.

The Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, if passed, will not only lead to the repeal of the PWPA, but will give us a new law that deftly balances civil liberties with the protection of critical infrastructure. Let me give you some examples.

As it relates to court security, the legislation will address court security through an amendment to the Police Services Act. We have generally replicated, with some updates and clarifications, the powers available under the PWPA.

La loi octroie au personnel de sécurité les pouvoirs suivants, si l'exercice de ces pouvoirs est raisonnable, afin de s'acquitter de ses responsabilités :

—exiger qu'une personne qui pénètre dans un palais de justice ou qui s'y trouve présente une pièce d'identité et fournisse des renseignements afin d'évaluer si elle représente un risque pour la sécurité;

—procéder à la fouille, sans mandat, d'une personne qui pénètre ou tente de pénétrer dans des lieux où se déroulent des instances judiciaires ou qui s'y trouve, ainsi qu'à la fouille de son véhicule et des autres biens dont elle a la garde ou le soin;

—procéder, sans mandat, en employant au besoin la force raisonnable, à la fouille d'une personne sous garde qui se trouve sur les lieux où se déroulent des instances judiciaires ou qui est transportée à destination ou en provenance de ces lieux et à la fouille des biens dont elle a la garde ou le soin.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize that while the legislation may require a person entering or attempting to enter a courthouse to submit to a search, identify himself or herself or provide information, if anyone does not want to comply, they can simply walk away.

However, if they persist in entering the courthouse after refusing to provide information or submit to a search, court security personnel can refuse entry and demand that the person leave the premises, using reasonable force, if necessary, to exclude or remove the person.

If the person continues to try to enter or refuses to leave, they could be arrested. These powers are justifiable measures to ensure the security of our courthouses and help maintain the efficiency of our judicial system.

En ce qui concerne les autres installations, nous avons réduit la liste des ouvrages publics aux centrales électriques et aux installations nucléaires. La loi, si elle est adoptée, ne s'appliquera qu'à une liste très courte d'installations.

The legislation will apply to prescribed electricity generating facilities and prescribed nuclear facilities. Currently, on the nuclear side, the legislation and its anticipated regulations will only apply where major nuclear reactors are located. We anticipate this will include the premises of the reactors operated by Bruce Power, Ontario Power Generation and Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. The act permits the appointment of security personnel at these facilities as peace officers with the power to require any person who wishes to enter, or is on, the premises to produce identification and provide information for the purposes of assessing the person's security risk, and search upon consent any person, property or vehicle entering or on the premises.

Similar to the court security legislation, a person can simply walk away if they do not wish to submit to a search, produce identification or provide information. If they persist in entering the facility after refusing to provide information or submit to a search, security personnel can refuse entry and demand that the person immediately leave, and use reasonable force, if necessary, to prevent their entry or remove them. Any person who continues to try to enter or refuses to leave the premises could be arrested.

We're also going to establish the same offences and penalties as for court security: 60 days in jail or a \$2,000 fine, or both.

The act also provides the authority to make regulations to prescribe electricity generating facilities and nuclear facilities; govern the appointment of persons providing security; govern the qualifications, training, duties and oversight of persons providing security; govern the exercise of the powers of a person providing security, including powers as a peace officer; and impose duties on the operator of the restricted access facility with respect to the provision of security services under the act.

1600

Monsieur Speaker, I'd like to repeat that adding other categories of infrastructure other than nuclear and electricity generating facilities would require amendments to the act. No other categories of infrastructure could be added simply through regulation. The process for changing an act is very transparent and open, and the content of any proposed amendments is subject to public debate, and that's key for us.

Dans le cadre du processus législatif, et encore aujourd'hui, nous discutons toujours avec nos partenaires afin de nous assurer que ce projet de loi nous donnera une loi efficace. En discutant et en écoutant nos partenaires—theurs commentaires et leurs positions—nous

sommes mieux en mesure de conserver le large consensus qui existe présentement.

I remind you, Monsieur Speaker, that we incorporated government and opposition amendments last year when the bill went through committee. I'm happy to say that after all that work, we achieved a broad consensus on how to proceed. We all agree that we need balance and, if passed, that is exactly what this legislation will provide: a balance between protecting certain facilities and protecting the civil liberties that Ontarians expect and deserve. We now have proposed legislation that protects critical Ontario installations and respects the rights of its citizens.

In closing, I want to thank all those who came before the committee and gave us their good advice to make sure that we are, with this new legislation, serving the community well while protecting civil liberties.

I ask the members of this House to support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** We'll continue the debate with the member from Scarborough—Agincourt.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased and honoured to follow the minister and rise in support of the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013. As the minister has stated, we need to modernize the legal framework for the protection of some of our most valuable and vital infrastructure and of our courthouses.

We know that despite the fact that the Public Works Protection Act is generally used in a limited fashion, we rely upon it on a daily basis to provide security at nuclear and electricity generating facilities and at Ontario courthouses.

Mr. Speaker, as we move to repeal and replace the PWPA, I believe it is important that we look at the situation that was facing our predecessors when the act was made law. The origins of the PWPA go back to the start of the Second World War. At that time, our predecessors in the House were worried that our power plants might be sabotaged. In fact, our predecessors were so concerned that on September 19, 1939, the House convened for an urgent and extraordinary session to adopt this law at that time. Our records show that the law was adopted in under three days and with bipartisan support. That's unbelievable. So, obviously, there were some concerns, right?

I have some quotes from the leaders of the day that I want to share with the members here to give you a flavour of the importance of the PWPA at the time. In a *Globe and Mail* article dated September 20, 1939, the Conservative opposition leader, George Drew, was quoted as saying that he agreed with the act and would support it. With the country at war, he said, it was necessary to protect hydro, railways, public works and industries linked with war production. Premier Hepburn was even more blunt. In that same article, he was quoted as follows: "The greatest service a Nazi sympathizer could do would be to destroy these plants." Fortunately, there were no attacks on our facilities. The war ended, but the law stayed on our books and drew little attention.



A lot has changed since 1939. For example, the Criminal Code of Canada, modern federal anti-terrorism legislation and the provincial emergency legislation give our police services the tools to prevent, investigate and manage the fallout of terrorism. In other words, we would not create any legal gaps for ourselves by repealing the PWPA and replacing it with the legislation we have proposed for facilities that have made use of the current act.

In addition to the threat of terrorism, some stakeholders have asked how the proposed legislation may impact security during the 2015 Pan Am Games and similar major events. Police have powers under common law and statutes such as the Criminal Code to enable them to maintain public order when this is required. Temporary security for major events is generally dealt with at the local level by the police of the jurisdiction and affected municipalities. The province will work with the stakeholders to ensure that an appropriate and effective security plan is in place for the Pan Am Games.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before the House today achieves a balance between the need to provide powers to protect certain facilities where the need for that protection exists, against the desire to use those powers in a way that minimally infringes on the civil liberties of Ontarians.

The bill certainly responds to a key recommendation by former Chief Justice Roy McMurtry. In his report, Mr. McMurtry concluded that there was a need for continued protection of these facilities but found the original PWPA to be an outdated legal tool with too broad a definition of what constitutes a "public work." He therefore recommended the repeal and replacement of the PWPA. That's what Ontario's new government is doing.

It's important to note that Bill 51 includes the government and opposition amendments that followed last year's review of the proposed legislation by the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. All stakeholders supported the legislation; it's true. The opposition may not remember that; let me remind you. Bill 51 incorporates the feedback from our partners, in particular when it comes to religious accommodation at the courthouses. I remember distinctly that the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton asked that question at committee, and I remember hearing the witnesses asking us about accommodation.

I want to take a minute—the proposed legislation talks about it. Under subsection 138(6), the heading "Accommodation": "When a person who is authorized by a board or by the commissioner as described in subsection (1) exercises powers under this section with respect to other persons, he or she shall ensure that those persons are accommodated in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Human Rights Code, and this includes accommodation in connection with creed or disability," in the proposed bill.

The proposed legislation also includes minor technical changes regarding the preservation and making explicit the judiciary's rights of access to the courthouse.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario is the largest nuclear jurisdiction in North America. There are 16 nuclear reactors capable of generating electricity and supplying Ontario with en-

ergy to power our industries and light our homes. But whereas nuclear installations in Quebec and New Brunswick are in remote areas, two of our most important nuclear generating stations are in Durham region: in Pickering and Darlington.

Our challenges are different. Securing these facilities requires balancing the powers given to those protecting them with the rights of Ontarians who reside nearby or conduct recreational facilities near these installations. The replacement legislation would allow for the current use of the powers granted under the PWPA for security at courthouses, nuclear facilities and large electricity generating facilities. But there are differences in how these powers could be applied, and they are in line with what we have heard from Mr. McMurtry and the Ombudsmen in their respective reports.

### 1610

The PWPA currently gives guards the authority to exercise their powers in the approaches to public works. This is particularly relevant for our partners from the nuclear sector. The approaches to a facility were a concern for Mr. McMurtry and the civil liberties groups, because it was vague and hard to define. Under our proposal, the guards would exercise their specified powers only on the premises. These powers would not apply off-premises.

There were concerns raised—again, witnesses who came before the committee had some concerns about that. Since the approach falls outside the premises of the nuclear facilities, any security issues should be addressed in partnership with the police of the jurisdiction. I believe this is a reflection of the balanced nature of this bill.

We know that the G20 summit in Toronto, in June 2010, led to many questions about the usefulness of the PWPA. A security-led event of this magnitude is uncommon even for a large city like my own, the city of Toronto. A more modern legislative framework was needed. That is why we are moving with the repeal and replacement of the PWPA. We are doing so in the spirit of openness and transparency.

The minister recognized the various stakeholders we have consulted. I also want to thank our colleagues from the committee and our member from up north—I can't remember his riding. I know his first name; I can't remember the riding. I can't mention it.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** What's his first name?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** The Great White North. Up north. He knows who he is.

Anyway, I know the two opposition parties took a lot of time to review the bill, and I want to acknowledge their contributions to Bill 51. We have consulted with all sectors involved, from municipalities to police organizations, from civil liberties groups to power companies, from Canada's nuclear regulators to provincial ministries and the federal government. We have been very thorough, and that is one of the reasons behind the broad support for this bill.

The replacement legislation is focused on what we know to be current uses of the PWPA: security at court-

houses, nuclear facilities and large electricity generating facilities. Owners of other public works and the police have sufficient authority to address security needs at these facilities under other legislation, including the Trespass to Property Act. It is one of the motivations behind our decision to make the addition of any new category of infrastructure possible only through a legislative amendment.

Changing an act is, by its nature, a transparent and open process. We in this House know that it goes through many steps, starting with the bill being read, then it goes to second reading and then to committee, and that's the right thing to do. The content of any proposed amendment is subject to debate in the House—and we will be doing that very shortly—and in committee. Again, I believe it's the right thing to do. The public's input will be sought.

Once again, the process will be open and transparent, and we welcome any improvements. If there are any new things we have not included in the proposed legislation, let's hear them through the debate or through the committee. That's essential for us in helping to maintain the trust of Ontarians and for them to know that their safety and respect for their charter of rights is paramount for our government.

If a member of the public wishes to conduct business inside a courthouse, or if they wish to enter a nuclear or electricity generating facility, they have to abide by security procedures. However, if someone does not wish to subject themselves to these security measures, they have every right to simply walk away. We respect people's choices. This is what it's all about: balancing the legislation and ensuring security of these important facilities in Ontario.

We have made provisions in the proposed legislation to ensure that the PWPA is not repealed before all the necessary measures to protect courthouses and nuclear and electricity generating facilities are in place. There will be no gaps in ensuring the safety of these vital facilities while regulations are being developed.

Given the fact that our proposed legislation is coming to the House—we're dealing with legislation that's so outdated and everybody knows it's outdated, and this is the right time to address it. The accompanying regulations will be developed in partnership with our stakeholders—again, in consultation with our stakeholders. So every step of the way, there will be consultation and having conversations with stakeholders who will be affected. The ministry will undertake further consultations on the regulations. The regulatory framework will be clearly spelled out because we believe that's a right thing to do.

In summary, we believe the proposed legislation strikes a just balance between security and civil rights when it comes to protecting Ontario's courthouses, electricity generating plants and nuclear facilities. We are making our law more modern to reflect the values shared by Ontarians, values that have evolved since 1939 and the start of the Second World War. Some of the young

pages weren't even born. I would dare say some of us hadn't even been born when this piece of legislation was passed in the House. We no longer fear saboteurs operating in the dark of night and menacing our power and water treatment plants, or our dams or bridges.

We need no longer depend on a piece of legislation drafted more than 70 years ago to know that our critical infrastructure is secure. We rely on sophisticated police services and modern legislation to deal with the unexpected, and that, again, is the right thing to do. We need to update how we protect vital installations and civil liberties.

I encourage all our colleagues in the House to consider improving this bill—and our proposed legislation does not mean just today but also for the future. I enjoin the members of this House to support this legislation, and thank you for this opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Perth—Wellington, is he in his seat? No. Now he is.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Thank you for reminding me to get back to my seat, sir. I appreciate it.

This is a bill that was introduced last time, last session, and unfortunately, due to prorogation, it died on the order paper. It would seem to me that if bills are that important to this government, they would think of those things before they arbitrarily stop the business of the House.

It's a bill that repeals the Public Works Protection Act. The Liberals say they are replacing the archaic secret service law police used to place hundreds of people under arrest during the G20 summit in 2010. I guess it's certainly something that is supportable by all parties. But it interests me that if these bills are so important to the people of Ontario and to this government, they should have maybe been thought of before prorogation was enacted last time, when all these bills died.

I want to quote our leader, Tim Hudak, when he said, "Nobody forced them to bring in the secret law at the G20. Nobody forced their arm. It was a major scandal for the province." And now the government has introduced legislation to try to take the attention off what happened during the G20 summit.

So I would ask the government, if they happen to be around in the future—prorogation is something that does kill bills, and they should be reminded of that. If these bills are so important, they should be brought to the attention of the House probably a little sooner than when they have been brought in the past.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I listened intently to the opening lead of the minister and of the member. We discuss a lot of very important issues in this House, but this is pretty high up on the list because it's about people's safety and people's security.

Yes, the member from the PCs brings up an important fact: that we are having to re-debate this because the House was prorogued. It is a relevant point. I think the most relevant point is, where this bill comes from is that



during the G20 steps were taken by the government that were, in fact, quite questionable. People's rights were trampled on. Perhaps one of the most serious for us in this House is that—I wasn't here at that time, but if my memory serves me correctly—those steps were taken by the government while the House was in session. We have to be very, very cognizant of that.

1620

This bill is being brought forward to replace that very old act that was proclaimed during World War II, when, yes, very few of us were around, so we're having a chance now to make this act better. The government has proposed one that hopefully we can work together and try to amend to make it as strong as possible so that cannot be abused by others for purposes that are not in the best use of the people's House. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I think the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and her parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough—Agincourt, made the case today why this bill is so important. It was originally, of course, brought in in 1939, the Public Works Protection Act, and at that particular time, of course, the United States did not enter the war. The Americans did not enter the Second World War until December 1941, and there was this fear at that time that Nazi saboteurs or sympathizers in the United States could potentially come across Lake Ontario, Lake Erie or one of the Great Lakes and actually sabotage generating facilities right here in Ontario. Of course, that would have put a real dent into the Canadian war effort, and legislation was brought in at that particular time.

But fast-forward to, of course, the very tragic events in Boston a week ago and the revelations just this week that there were terrorists that had a plot to destroy a Via Rail train in this country. It would have created enormous havoc and potentially cost lives. Our great police forces, working together, were able to uncover this plot and make the appropriate arrests.

In my riding of Peterborough we're very close to Darlington, that nuclear facility just down the road, about 35 to 40 kilometres away, in Durham. This bill will actually bring in some additional security that is so important in terms of what could obviously be a target. In this day and age, we don't know. There are so many cells and groups out there kicking around that we have to always be on our guard.

This is a very important piece of legislation, when it is approved, to make sure that we bring the utmost protection to facilities right here in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's a pleasure to rise and to address Bill 51, the Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013.

You know, unlike the Public Works Protection Act, the PWPA, this act actually is very limited. It covers very limited categories of infrastructure. I think it's important

for people to also realize that the proposed legislation would do the following three things. First of all, it would repeal the PWPA. Secondly, it would set out a legislative amendment to the Police Services Act to address court security. Thirdly and lastly, it would set out stand-alone legislation respecting security at prescribed electricity generating and nuclear facilities.

Our position, for the PCs, is pretty straightforward. The fact that this is straightforward legislation addresses the conclusions raised in the Ombudsman's report by following the recommendations of the McMurtry report. It's unfortunate, however, that the Liberal government has wasted so much time with prorogation when this important bill could have been passed last year.

I think it's important to note as well that this bill is being reintroduced after dying on the order paper in its third reading. It's really unfortunate. It was originally introduced because it led up to the 2010 G20 summit in Toronto and the fact that the McGuinty cabinet had invoked regulation 233/10 under the PWPA, making the G20 zone a public work from June 21 through the 28th.

There was a lot of media coverage on this, and unfortunately, a lot of people were arrested during this time. About 1,100 were arrested, and only 140 were charged. For that, we will support this, but it's about time it has come forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The minister has two minutes to reply.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First, let me say thank you to the members from Perth—Wellington, Timiskaming—Cochrane, the Minister of Rural Affairs and the MPP for Chatham—Kent—Essex for their input in this bill.

I want to give special thanks to the member from Scarborough—Agincourt. When this bill was first introduced, she was my parliamentary assistant and did extraordinary work to get this bill to committee and to get consensus from the people around the table.

I want to thank also the Ombudsman, M. André Marin, qui nous a fourni des bons commentaires sur comment on peut améliorer, en éliminant cette loi-là—comment on peut l'améliorer et surtout s'assurer que les citoyens sont en sécurité quand ils entrent dans nos palais de justice, que ce soit des avocats, des juges, des policiers ou des citoyens qui vont témoigner. Alors, il nous a donné de très, très bons commentaires.

Aussi, le juge McMurtry, qui est un homme extraordinaire avec une réputation incroyable et qui nous a donné, lui aussi, des commentaires qui nous ont bien aidés. Et l'avocate Nathalie Des Rosiers, qui est l'avocate-conseil pour la «Canadian Civil Liberties Association» et qui est une avocate très respectée qui a été la doyenne de la faculté de droit civil de l'Université d'Ottawa. Je veux remercier tout ce monde. Merci.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to follow the minister and join the debate on Bill 51. God; like Yogi Berra would say, it's like déjà vu all over again. I think

I've been in this movie. In fact, we were all in this movie last year.

Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence a little bit. As you know, today is World Meningitis Day. I did want to comment a little bit on that and on the fact that we're wearing these carnations. I can't say that I wear everything that comes forth into this chamber, but I did put on a carnation today. I have the daffodil for cancer. April is cancer month, in honour of all of those who have fought and are fighting cancer. Particularly, I wear it in honour of my mother, who passed away in 1974 from lung cancer. We all wear these daffodils for different reasons, but I think we all wear them for very important reasons.

The carnation is for World Meningitis Day. My brother Michael contracted meningitis when he was, I think, maybe four or five years old. He's over 50 now, so I'm not 100% sure. I think he was four or five. I'm a little bit older than he by a few years, and I remember how difficult that was for my parents and the rest of our family. But I remember even more succinctly our daughter Heidi, who contracted meningococcal at the age of 12 in 1993. That was probably one of the most difficult times for my wife and me, and the rest of the family as well. Heidi ended up in CHEO, and the doctors there said that within an hour she would have been gone. Meningococcal is a fiercely virulent form of meningitis that causes blood poisoning, and normally the subject has about 24 hours to live after they've contracted the disease.

I could talk for a long time about it, but it was one of the most trying experiences of my wife's life, because she was following the ambulance. She was ahead of the ambulance going to Ottawa because they told her they needed to treat Heidi in Pembroke first, and that trip from Arnprior to Ottawa was the most difficult period of her life, because she knew Heidi was in that ambulance, but she didn't know if Heidi was alive or if she didn't make it. So that was one hell of a trip from Arnprior to Ottawa.

1630

In the end, not only did Heidi survive, she survived without—many times, those who survive have brain damage and other permanent disabilities. Heidi has none of that—a little bit of scarring. She is now 32 years old, and her career is working with disadvantaged children, mentally challenged children. She's wonderfully good at that, but she is also a wonderful mother, and today her daughter, Lilli Elma Joan Couburn, is one year old. I had to talk about that. To Lilli, happy birthday, and of course, Heidi, we're just glad you're here. Love you.

So let's talk about the War Measures Act and the Public Works Protection Act, and let's roll the clock back to 1939, if we may. The member for Peterborough had a short response there, and I know he's a man who takes considerable interest in our history here in Canada and particularly the history of those who fought for freedom in the world wars, and I know he has a great deal of knowledge on that subject. In fact, I was chatting with him earlier today on that very issue.

You can understand the climate of the day. Hitler had invaded Poland, and by doing so begun the Second

World War, because Britain had an agreement with Poland that if they were invaded, Britain would come to their aid, which they did; and by extension we, as Canadians, were drawn into the war when Britain declared war on Nazi Germany, when Hitler invaded Poland.

As the member for Peterborough—the Minister of Rural Affairs. He is the member for Peterborough, but he's also the Minister of Rural Affairs. As he pointed out, the United States did not immediately enter the war, and there was some considerable concern that access to Canada might be gained through the United States and the waters and the borders that we share. At the time—you have to understand the mindset of the day—there had to be some serious legislation passed in order to protect our security. So the federal government passed the War Measures Act; Ontario followed with the Public Works Protection Act, and fortunately the act hadn't been reviewed much since the war ended in 1945.

We see wars today, and the scope of them. While there's a tremendous amount of money expended on them, and there's a tremendous amount of equipment and technology, the world wars were fought by people, massive numbers of soldiers and airmen. My father was a veteran of the Second World War, as many of the people who have served in this chamber were, those who served at the time that he would have served.

You know, my dad didn't like to speak very much about the war, because I think it was an uncomfortable subject for them. I think sometimes a lot of veterans who served in the Second World War did a fair bit of drinking, and you wonder why. You know, the horrors that they faced as soldiers, infantrymen, airmen and sailors in that war had a lifetime impact, and if you weren't there, you couldn't possibly understand it the same way.

I was chatting with some folks yesterday—and I want to commend the minister, Minister Meilleur, for joining us in South Algonquin yesterday and coming to view some of the facilities that were threatened by the flood waters of this past weekend. We're just praying and hoping that the rains today are not severe enough to exacerbate the problem. But we do know that further down the Madawaska River system, concerns are growing, because we have a reservoir called Bark Lake that allows us to fill that, obviously, to the extent that we can, and after that, it's going to mean that that water is going to continue to be passed down the Madawaska River. There's other water coming into the rivers further south, from the York River, which is causing problems in Bancroft etc.

I do want to thank the minister for being there yesterday. I was glad to be able to join her there as well, meeting with the folks from South Algonquin. They have a tremendously coordinated response team in place. The minister herself complimented them on the job they have done.

We do hope that nature is co-operative in ensuring that the flooding has crested or peaked, and we can hope that it doesn't get any worse at this point.

At that meeting, I was also chatting with some folks. We had some time to chat before the minister got there,



because she had other places she was visiting, as well, that were threatened by the floods. We were talking about how it was all men soldiers at that time, and that they would come back from the war and it was basically, "I don't want to hear about your problems. The war is over. Get on with it." They were boys. They were young, in their twenties. They had just experienced something that—most people cannot even imagine the horrors. We didn't understand post-traumatic stress disorder. You hear about it every day today. Then you think about the numbers of soldiers that we had in the theatre in Europe and in the South Pacific. We basically turned them loose and said, "You're on your own."

There was a program in place which was very helpful, in that people who had served in the military and served as veterans in the war did have access to government jobs as they became available, and they did get priority. We're thankful for that, and I know that many of them were thankful for that. But other than that, there wasn't a whole lot of support surrounding the experience of having been in that war. Today, of course, it's a whole lot different. We understand these things a whole lot better.

After serving their country as a soldier, many of these people continued to serve in various capacities, and many of them found their way here or in the House of Commons, or in the various Legislatures across the country, depending upon what the province of their residency was. So they continued to serve.

I don't know when the last veteran of the Second World War would have sat in this Legislature—I don't know if they keep those records—but it has been some time, obviously, because you'd probably have to be at least 86 or 87 to have served in the Second World War. So it has been a while since we would have had someone who actually served and has also served in this Legislature. It has changed the dynamic around this place.

This morning, I had the opportunity to speak to June Turner, the widow of a former member from Peterborough but also a former Speaker of the Legislature, John Turner, who passed away in January of this year. We had a nice chat. She remarked how my father and her husband were good friends here, as so many of them were who would have had those similar experiences; that you could talk to someone who actually knew exactly how you felt when you were talking about those issues and those experiences.

1640

I had a nice chat with Mrs. Turner today, and I hope that over the next couple of weeks I might even have a chance to meet her. We're looking forward to that. I never did meet John Turner, but I know—because their tenures here were overlapping—that my dad and Mr. Turner would have had many good conversations here and many good times as well in their capacities as MPPs. Both were former businessmen as well, so they would have had lots to talk about during their time in the Legislature.

When I was talking about it last—I've got to tell you, when I say "last year," it was March 2012 when I last

spoke to An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act. It was then Bill 34, in the last session of this Parliament. It is now Bill 51 in this session. So it is basically 14 months—we're almost into May—since I last spoke on the efforts of this Legislature to pass repealing legislation.

I must say, when I spoke about it, my colleague from Nepean—Carleton—I was talking about my dad's service, and he had served in the battle of Caen, but I didn't even know that; I found out through my brother. The member from Nepean—Carleton—I want to thank her—had her husband, Joe Varner, who works for the department of defence in Ottawa, research my father's military record. She was able to get a copy of his military record. I thank her and her husband for doing that. I need somebody probably from the military to decipher it for me, but nonetheless it's a wonderful thing to have for myself, and I'll make sure my kids get to see it too.

It's almost 14 months since we talked about this bill to repeal the Public Works Protection Act. You really have to ask yourself: What have we been doing? What have we been doing all this time?

I just want to go back also to when they brought in the War Measures Act. On February 19, 1942, they had in Winnipeg a what-if day. Just again, to illustrate what was the mindset of the day in Canada at that time, they had a what-if day. It was, "What if the Nazis invaded Canada and Winnipeg?" What if they invaded? Of course, we have these things today—these mock disasters where we recreate or pretend-create a disaster to see how our first responders are going to work, to see how the public is going to interact and to see how we're going to be able to get beyond the disaster, if it was to ever happen.

On February 19, 1942, in the city of Winnipeg, they had exactly that. It was depicting a Nazi invasion of our country to see how our support systems, the public, all of those things, would work cohesively and coordinatively to ensure that we were safe. That was important. That was how people lived in those days.

There's nobody in this Legislature, with the exception of Monte Kwinter, who would have been—I don't think there's anybody else—around in 1939. Maybe 1942—I don't think so. Monte Kwinter certainly was. But imagine the daily fear that was out there when the world was at war. These were the kinds of exercises that people were going through. Today, we don't think about it that much. The Public Works Protection Act, when it was imposed or used as the lever to pass regulation 233/10 on June 2, 2010—it was an inappropriate use of that act.

I know the minister has talked a lot about the changes in the act. Let's get it on the record, Speaker. We support the bill. We support the repeal of the act. We support the changes. But I don't think it's fair to this Legislature or to the people of Ontario to pretend that this thing just came out of the minister's office because folks were looking to make things better, and, "We'd like to bring in a new piece of legislation. It's going to be an improvement and good for all, and we've got to make sure that we can protect the courts and the nuclear facilities." No.

The reason we are debating this legislation, the reason we debated Bill 34 14 months ago was because of the dog's breakfast they made of the Public Works Protection Act and how they used it to provide security and police presence at the G20 here in Toronto in June 2010. The regulation gave them the powers from June 21 to 28. The actual G20 was only June 26 and 27. It was a totally inappropriate use of power.

The police were not informed properly of what their true powers under the act were. But what angered a lot of people—I'm going to get to that at some point here today—was how that regulation was passed. You see, on June 2, 2010, this House was in session. We were sitting, just as we are today. Now, I know the reason we have to bring this bill back again under another number, another bill, Bill 51—I know the amendments that were talked about in committee when we were debating Bill 34 have been incorporated to the largest degree in this bill. But the reason it's coming back a second time is that the government—either they didn't know what they were doing, or they did it by design, or they were just trying to get out of this place—prorogued the Legislature on October 15, 2012. By proroguing the Legislature, they killed the bill. They killed Bill 34, which had already gone through committee—had already gone through first reading, had gone through second reading, had gone through committee. It was at third reading stage in this House—third reading stage. All that was left was a few hours of debate and this bill would have become law—would have become law. It would have been already enacted. I think it's a fair question: Who's to blame? Who's at fault here? The opposition didn't prorogue the Legislature. The opposition didn't shut down the debate. The opposition didn't bring this on.

Now, this whole episode of how it was used at the G20—and I have in my hand—under a great deal of pressure from the media, the opposition in this Legislature and people all across the country, the government felt forced, particularly when it was found out that this secret legislative regulation was passed in a secret cabinet meeting while this House was in session. There was no reason for the government to do that. If they believed that the Public Works Protection Act should be utilized to protect the participants and the visiting countries at the G20 and the representatives of those nations, if they believed that that was necessary, then they had a responsibility to come to the people of this Legislature, the people who are duly elected by their constituents all across this province.

1650

We're all equal in here. We all have one vote, and we all represent a constituency. Some people may be members of the executive council. We understand that. In our parliamentary system, one party is the government, other parties are opposition, and the members of the executive council are members of the governing party. We understand that. They have a great deal of power. But as members of the Legislature, we're no different. We have one vote. But particularly in the circumstances of a majority,

they run the show; they control it. But it was an abject abdication of their responsibility to do it the way they did it.

When I walk through the halls here in this Legislature, I get goosebumps. When I walk down and I see those names engraved on the marble wall—every person who has ever sat in this chamber as an elected member has their name engraved on that wall. It isn't for show, Speaker. It's so that we understand that the people who came before us have left a legacy that we are responsible for protecting—the Legislature of the province of Ontario. We should not denigrate the memory of those who came before us and we should not denigrate the work that they've done here by passing legislation at secret cabinet meetings that should have come to the floor of this chamber. That was wrong.

I have to ask myself, and I have to ask the folks on the other side, again, what were you thinking? What was going through your mind that you could possibly believe that this was the right thing to do? There was no crisis on June 2. There was plenty of time to let the people know. And what did you get out of it? Well, you got out of it a real mess because once it was known by the people of Ontario and once it was known by the media what you were doing behind closed doors, people were infuriated. People were infuriated.

I don't fault the members of the police force. Things were done that have been shown subsequently to have been abuses of power, but they were led to believe that they had that power. You have to understand that if you give law enforcement officers a tool in the tool box, so to speak, then they rightfully feel they are compelled to use that tool if they feel the situation warrants it, because if they don't use that tool and something goes haywire, as they say, then they'll be accused of not using the authority and the power that was granted them. But there was a tremendous amount of misunderstanding as to what the actual powers that were being conveyed to the police were when they passed that legislation.

The members of the cabinet who sat there and debated this—and there were other members of the Legislature, as well, who sat in that meeting. Some of them are cabinet members now. I was looking for that list, but I can't come up with it while I'm trying to talk. I can't do two things at once, Speaker. There were a number of people who were at that meeting who passed that, and I have to ask them, as I ask everyone in this House, when you made that decision, how could you possibly have felt that you were doing the right thing? How could you possibly have been able to justify that you were going to give the kind of powers—you must have known something was wrong. You must have known it was wrong, that you decided to do it in that fashion. Because if you had no fear, if you believed that what you were going to do would have the support of this Legislature and the support of the people, then you would have brought it to this chamber and you would have asked the duly elected members, "What is your view? What is your opinion? Is



this what we need to do to ensure the safety of the people at the G20?"

Hey, we understand that protecting those representatives of other nations was paramount. That absolutely, without question, was the priority at the time. Security had to be a number one priority. We know that ever since 9/11, terrorism and terrorists have been on the minds of Canadians, Americans and people all around the world. When you have people visiting from other countries, you do not want to run the risk that one of those dignitaries could be injured, killed or have other people fall victim to a terrorist attack. Look at what we recently just had—an attack. We don't know all of the details, but the bombs at the Boston Marathon—people were killed. Young people were killed. Hundreds were injured.

We're always on alert, and we have to be on alert. Recently, of course, we had the thwarting of a possible terrorist attack on Via Rail, and I take my hat off to all of the law enforcement authorities, all of the investigators that worked continuously on this file—counterterrorism—to ensure that we are safe, or do their very best that things like this don't happen. My only concern, quite frankly, is that while I'm very, very pleased we were able to catch these people before something happened, I have my concerns and reservations about our legal system that will probably—because they didn't actually commit the terrorist act, we'll have these people back in our midst far too soon. I don't think we deal with those people harshly enough at all.

In my view, how we would be dealing with terrorists is—it wouldn't fit with the Canadian way because we don't allow capital punishment in Canada. People who commit terrorist acts—I have no hesitation in saying that they should be recipients of the harshest punishment possible. I was very dismayed, I must say, when the new federal Liberal leader intimated that instead of dealing with the crimes of terrorists, we need to get to the root causes—I'm paraphrasing, not quoting—of what made them feel excluded from society. When somebody commits a terrorist act, I'm not really worried about their feelings at that point. I'm worried about the other people, the innocents, who could fall victims to those kinds of people. I think those comments of Mr. Trudeau are quite regrettable.

As I said earlier, the Ombudsman, André Marin, who produced this report—interestingly enough, he didn't call it the "investigation on regulation 233/10"; he didn't call it Report on Using a Sledgehammer to Deal with a Fly. He called it Caught in the Act. This is an official report of the Legislature done by André Marin, the Ombudsman. He did a very, very thorough report, and he made it crystal clear—crystal clear—that this was an inappropriate use of the government's authority and quite frankly an insult to the rest of the members of this Legislature.

1700

I know that many of the members who are here today were not actually here when this regulation was passed—233/10 was of course done in that secret cabinet meeting on June 2, 2010. Many of the members were only elected

here in 2011, and in the case of the member from Kitchener-Waterloo, she was elected in a by-election in 2012. But someone was in those seats that the new members occupy, and they were frozen out of the decision-making process.

I would ask all the members—I'd ask those new members today—how would you feel if this Legislature was sitting today and the government passed a regulation that basically said, "You don't count"? Well, if you don't count, then neither do your constituents. If you don't count as a member of this Legislature, then what does that say about how the government feels about your constituents? I am only here by the grace of the constituents who have voted me here. I am here on their behalf, just as every other member of this Legislature is. We are here because our constituents have sent us here. If we're to be responsible to them, then we have the right to expect that the government is going to be responsible to us.

I just want to read a couple of things out of Mr. Marin's executive summary, which should tell people pretty clearly what he thought of the actions of the government. Now, as one of my colleagues said earlier, there were over 1,000 people arrested during the G20. A hundred and some were actually charged, and I think a lot of those charges were subsequently dropped, probably as a result of the fact that everyone realized that what we were doing here was not the action that was necessary, given the circumstances.

Mr. Marin's executive summary item number 1:

"Regulation 233/10, passed to enhance security during the G20 summit, should never have been enacted. It was likely unconstitutional. The effect of regulation 233/10, now expired, was to infringe on freedom of expression in ways that do not seem justifiable in a free and democratic society. Specifically, the passage of the regulation triggered the extravagant police authority found in the Public Works Protection Act, including the power to arbitrarily arrest and detain people and to engage in unreasonable searches and seizures. Even apart from the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the legality of Regulation 233/10 is doubtful. The Public Works Protection Act under which it was proclaimed authorizes regulations to be created to protect infrastructure, not to provide security to people during events. Regulation 233/10 was therefore probably invalid for having exceeded the authority of the enactment under which it was passed. These problems should have been apparent, and given the tremendous power Regulation 233/10 conferred on the police, sober and considered reflection should have been given to whether it was appropriate to arm officers with such authority. This was not done. The decision of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services to sponsor the regulation was unreasonable."

That is executive summary item number 1.

Do you think, if this chamber of 107 members would have had a chance to discuss what we were going to do for the G20, that we may have realized that this was overkill, that it was inappropriate? It was not the right piece of legislation.

What we're doing here today with the new bill, which is about protecting infrastructure and protecting security around courts—that's what we should be doing. We understand that. But I don't think it would be fair to the police, whose reputation suffered a great deal as a result of this—the police in Toronto; the police from across the country who came to support, because of the numbers that were required—and it wouldn't be fair to the over 1,000 people who were arrested if we don't also remember that the government of the day used their legislative powers unnecessarily to confer unnecessary powers to the police, powers that subsequently, it shows, were not clearly understood by the police as to how they could actually use them with respect to the circumstances that we were engaged in with the G20. As I say, it's déjà vu all over again. We're back here, when we should be moving beyond that.

But again, in August, when the proverbial stuff, as they say, was hitting the fan—in August 2010, a cabinet shuffle. You know what cabinet shuffles are, Speaker. When it's getting a little hot, when the fox is getting close to the chicken house, all of a sudden you get a cabinet shuffle. And they said, "Ay yi yi. We've got to do something with Bartolucci. We've got to get him out of community safety." So, on August 18, 2010, a cabinet shuffle. The minister who was there for the bill—but I don't specifically fault Rick Bartolucci. This was a cabinet—coming right from the top. He was part of it, but so were other members of the cabinet. Anyway, he was unceremoniously shoistered out of cabinet—not out of cabinet, but to a different ministry, so that—

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** How do you spell "shoister"?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I don't know.

I think Jim Bradley then became the Minister of Community Safety. I might be wrong on that. I'd have to go back and check my notes.

But of course, they'd bring in a seasoned guy like Bradley, who would be able to deflect criticism quite well, and, of course, "Well, I didn't—who? Me?"

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** "It wasn't me."

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** "It wasn't me." The fingers go; they're pointing out there at somebody, but "It wasn't me."

Listen, Dalton McGuinty was a master at this, a master at changing the channel by having a cabinet minister shuffled out and a cabinet minister shuffled in. He was a master at trying to get the heat off of—

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Himself.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, himself, yes, but also other members of the cabinet that he thought might be underperforming. So he would move them quickly out of that portfolio.

So then, when everything was really going bad, when this conference was over, when this G20 was over, and we were starting to find out about what really went on—July 9; that's my son Lucas's birthday—from July 9 to 26, when all of it was hitting the papers really, really hot and heavy, where was the Premier of the day? On vacation. He took that opportunity, when he should have been

answering questions, to hole up, disappear. We don't know where he went; we don't know what he did. We know what he didn't do. He didn't come to Queen's Park and answer the questions that he should have been answering.

1710

At that cabinet meeting, the whole cabinet was at the table for the passing of the regulation, Speaker.

Also there at the time were the member for Peterborough, now the Minister of Rural Affairs; the member for Ottawa Centre, now the Minister of Labour; the member for Ottawa—Orléans; the member for Mississauga—Streetsville—when he's not visiting the moon; the member for Willowdale, who is now also in cabinet; the member for Bramalea—Gore—Malton, who is no longer in the Legislature; the member for Ajax—Pickering, who is no longer in the Legislature; and the member for Algoma—Manitoulin, who is no longer in the Legislature. Those were seats that the members lost, or they didn't run again. I've got to ask: Why didn't one of them speak up? They weren't in cabinet. Their lives were still spent a lot in their constituencies and living with the real people. Why didn't they speak up? Why didn't they ask themselves, "Am I just going to be quiet and do what the corner office always tells us to do—all those well-educated folks in the corner office who know more than everybody? Are we just going to let them run the show again, or are we going to ask ourselves, what's the right thing to do for the people of Ontario?"

As I said, security is an important consideration. It was an important consideration then, and it's an important consideration now. In fact, I know my colleague from Barrie has raised the concern about security for the Pan Am Games, which are only two years away—well, sometime in 2015. I'm not sure of the exact date. We're getting closer to these Pan Am Games that are going to be here, and I think they've got a total budget to run the games of a few hundred million, and it doesn't appear that they've taken into proper consideration the security for them whatsoever.

The G20 summit—and, hey, I have to ask, goodness gracious, do these things have to be that expensive? Between the G20 in Toronto and the G8 at Huntsville, the bill was about \$858 million—\$858 million. You have to ask yourself, with all of that money that was being spent, you'd think they could have planned the security in a little more commensurate way, commensurate with the threat that actually existed here at the time.

My colleague talks about this scandal—and I call it a scandal because it was so wrong—this scandal to enact regulation 233/10. It followed, in this government, the scandals at eHealth, where we're talking \$1 billion, and the scandal at Ornge, where we really don't know how much it's going to cost, but I think it's a fair bet that it's in the hundreds of millions of dollars—money that was inappropriately spent or money that was used to enrich people who were given the authority by this government to do just that. The issue there was proper oversight. And now we've followed it with another scandal in Missis-



sauga and Oakville, the cancellation of these gas plants, and the figure of \$858 million—

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Might be low.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —could be low. So it could have cost—can you imagine that? You know, we're talking a billion dollars. What good could we do in this world, in this province, with a billion dollars?

It just seems that every day there's a new reason why this government has, quite frankly, lived beyond its best-before date, and it just seems that the arrogance and the belief that they have a divine right to government becomes more and more entrenched, because, you see, we have the Premier, and this is the kind of—I know I'm not speaking directly to the bill, but I am speaking around the bill. I'm on the kernel of wheat but I'm not right down to the wheat germ there, you know.

So it's the attitude. The attitude that existed then, when they passed this regulation that circumvented the charter, that was likely unconstitutional—that attitude still exists. It's still there, and that's the problem with this government. It's the attitude that with their self-belief that they have a divine right to govern, they don't think they can do wrong. They don't see eHealth as being wrong. They don't see the fiasco at Ornge as being wrong. They don't see what they've done with the power plants as being wrong. They don't see the massive unemployment, particularly in the manufacturing sector, due to their energy policies as being wrong.

They continue to feed off themselves, thinking, "As long as we believe we're right, we're right." Now, isn't that a scary thing, Speaker? "As long as we believe we're right, we're right." That's the attitude—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** That's wrong.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That's wrong. Yes, thank you very much. The member for Kitchener–Waterloo says, "That's wrong," and she's right. There's always a wrong and a right. But when you start to believe that whatever you decide is right, that you are not subject to the views of others, that you are not subject to ethics, you are not subject to rules, you are not subject to the responsibility of responsive government, then you've crossed the line and it gets very dangerous. It gets very dangerous because then you start to believe that you ride above democracy, that you actually ride above democracy. That's the kind of attitude, and I hear that every day throughout the province, that this government doesn't really act like it feels it is answerable to the people.

That is the very basis of our system, the very basis of democracy. The people rule. We are only granted the honour of standing here, sitting here, on their behalf, but the rule of the people should always be supreme, and I'm very concerned with what I'm seeing in this government on a daily basis. There just seems to be this attitude that we rise above the people. No one rises above the people—no government, no government agency.

I want to go back to the report, Mr. Speaker. A couple of other things that Mr. Marin said—I'm going to skip to number 9 because I don't think I'm going to have enough time here. Is there any way of getting more?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Let's have a motion for another hour.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** So we go to number 9 of Mr. Marin's report. It talks about the history. I guess I've covered some of that. It talks about the creation of the Public Works Protection Act as a war measure.

**1720**

So the only way to understand why the Legislature of Ontario would create a statute conferring police powers of this kind is to hearken to history. The Public Works Protection Act is a war measure. It was enacted in 1939 during an emergency session of the Legislature in the days that followed the declaration of war against Germany, to deal with the threat posed by saboteurs against Ontario's infrastructure.

Guards and police officers were given the kind of authority one might expect in a time of war or emergency circumstance, the kind of authority that stretches, if not transgresses, constitutional rights. Yet here, in 2010, with the province of Ontario, conferring wartime powers on police officers in peacetime? That is a decision that should not have been taken lightly, particularly not in the era of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

By its very nature and design, the Public Works Protection Act, because of the severity of the situation and because of the gravity of the times, was designed to give the kinds of powers that would actually transgress people's rights, because drastic times call for drastic measures.

Having the G20 in Toronto was not World War II. It was the visitation of leaders from across the world to join here to meet to discuss like problems around the world, potential international solutions to problems that exist around the world, to deal with specific issues in certain parts of the world and to deal with the economic challenges etc. It's an ongoing dialogue between world leaders, but it wasn't World War II.

Why, then, would the people on that side of the House, the people of the executive council, have enacted regulation 233/10? It was wrong. We have to do better in this place than to trample on the rights of the very people we have sworn to represent in order to advance our own agenda. That's wrong. That's what happened here. The government of the day trampled on the rights of the very people they had sworn to represent, particularly when they took those oaths of cabinet. They trampled on those rights in order to advance their own agenda. They've done that repeatedly here. I'm becoming very concerned.

I only have a couple of minutes left.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Let's have a motion for another hour.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** It's no moon shot.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** No. So I do want to talk about the fact that we are going to support the legislation. We are going to support the legislation. It's overdue. We should have done it.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What's that?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Could we have first, second and third reading at the same time?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I don't think we're going to do that. The minister wants us to plow this through. My goodness gracious, we'd be guilty then of doing exactly what they did at the cabinet table. We're going to have a healthy debate on this bill. I'm going to say straight out that I'm going to commend the minister and the member for Scarborough—Agincourt. Is she still the parliamentary assistant?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** No, unfortunately.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** No. But she was the parliamentary assistant, and she did a good job on it. We incorporated many of the changes that were asked for. The bill is supported by both parties—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm glad you two are having a lovely discussion. I'd like to be part of it. Thanks very much. So we will go through the Chair, won't we? Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you, Speaker. Unlike the people of Ontario, you will not be excluded from the discussion, as they were when the debate was going on about 233/10.

The folks at OPG, the folks who run the nuclear plants up at the Bruce, the law enforcement agencies that deal with court security—they like the bill; they like the changes in the bill. So we are going to support the bill.

But, as I said, we're going to have a healthy debate. We have many members who didn't even have the opportunity to speak to the original bill, Bill 34, so they'll have an opportunity to speak to Bill 51. I'm sure members of the third party want to speak to it as well. But at the end of the day, I think that it is absolutely, completely necessary, not only because we need updating, but—I want to make it very clear—because of the way that this government acted so callously and so wrongly, it is important for this Legislature to take away from them the power to ever do it again.

By repealing the Public Works Protection Act as it is currently written, we will, I hope—but I never know what scheme they could be coming up with behind closed doors—we hope that we will have taken away from them the power to enact this legislation in the way that they did in 2010, because we know the temptation will be there. We know they'll be tempted to trample on people's rights. That will happen again. It's their nature; it's the way they are. But if we take away that weapon by repealing the Public Works Protection Act, I'm hopeful that, at the end of the day, we'll have a good, strong bill to protect our courts; a good, strong bill to protect our nuclear facilities; and the repeal of the Public Works Protection Act to protect us from the Liberal government. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure, actually, to follow some of the comments made by the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. He rightly points out that at the time when this original bill was debated, I was on

the outside of Queen's Park, and I can tell you that the concern from the general population in this province with how the security measures were brought in to deal with the G20 in Toronto—there were huge amounts of alarm by the people of this province.

Fundamentally, people recognized that it was wrong, that there had been abuse of power. A lot of people actually also felt that the G20 should never have been in Toronto. Some of my good friends actually thought that we should have held it up on perhaps a reservation in northern Ontario and showed the rest of the world how some First Nations, Métis, Inuit people live in this province and in this country. I'm sure that they would have welcomed the \$850 million in infrastructure projects, like bunny trails and gazebos. But I think they would have preferred to invest it in clean water and affordable housing and roads and sewage systems.

That said, of course we're going to support the repealing of the Public Works Protection Act because we can never open that door again to that abuse of power, and we, on this side of the House, have grave concerns about how the government went about bringing in those security measures.

I think it's also important to recognize that we've never heard an apology to the people who were quite honestly—whose rights were trampled on. We did not recognize our own city during those days. The not apologizing certainly seems to be a trend that we're seeing. Let's get this passed. Let's make sure that that abuse of power never happens again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I was here for all of the members' speeches this afternoon. The member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke—I just want to touch on the first part of the speech, what I thought was very important to me, personally, when he talked about his father. His father was a member of one of the most storied regiments of the Second World War: the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders that were headquartered in Cornwall, Ontario. If you read Ted Barris's book, *Canadians at Normandy*, you get a chance—I recommend the book because it talks about the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders at length as they moved from the beaches of Juno through to Cannes; and of course one of the decisive battles was the closing of the Falaise gap, which essentially trapped the German army in Normandy. It was the Canadian Army and one of the most storied regiments—the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders—that played a pivotal role during the early days of the Normandy campaign.

1730

When he talked about that, it drove home what I find, of course, is that great history of the greatest generation. We out of Peterborough had several members from the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders. One of them is still surviving, a guy by the name of Joe Sullivan, who resides now at Fairhaven long-term-care home in Peterborough.



To understand what those gentlemen did during those early days—you know, Mr. Speaker, you and I and everybody, all the 107 members here today, are here because of the exploits of that greatest generation that allowed us to serve.

Mr. Speaker, the first part of the speech I think is something that you and I and all of us need to talk about more frequently, because we're here because of them.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Speaker, this is straightforward legislation that addresses the conclusions raised in the Ombudsman's report following the recommendations of the McMurtry report. It's unfortunate that the Liberal government has wasted so much time with prorogation when this important bill could have been passed last year.

The outdated Public Works Protection Act included wartime powers for the protection of public works, but relied too much on the discretion of the minister, and we saw where that got us when the member from Sudbury was the minister, before he was stripped of that ministry. The former Minister of Public Safety and Correctional Services and the McGuinty cabinet used that discretion to secretly introduce special powers for police and fostered the widespread confusion that followed by abdicating any responsibility to clarify what the law said. This legislation removes the minister's discretion to grant special powers of arrest, but it does not address the lack of sound judgment and finger-pointing demonstrated during the G20 by the McGuinty cabinet.

This bill is being reintroduced after dying on the order paper in the third reading, with all-party support I might add, when the former Premier prorogued Parliament. And that, too, Speaker, was a very sad occasion in the history of this Parliament when, just as the Liberal government was about to be held to account for the gas plant scandal, the former Premier and several of the former cabinet ministers, including the finance minister and the Minister of Energy, left this Parliament, and many of these important bills died on the order paper.

So, while I support this bill, I also want to remind the Legislature why we're here debating it yet again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I think it's important that we all take a moment and really realize what we're discussing here and the importance of having these discussions in regard to what happened back in 2010. I wasn't here at the Legislature yet. I was watching in horror what was happening. I couldn't believe that this was happening in my own backyard, in my own province, just a six-hour drive from the front steps of my home.

When you look at this, you're talking about the largest mass arrest in Canadian history, where 1,100-plus individuals were assembled and basically stripped of whatever rights they had, just trampled and put into the backs of these vehicles; everything was taken away from them.

That is something that we need to discuss. That's the basic denial of your democratic rights. That's the basic

denial of what we have fought so long for, and it's basically what identifies us as Canadians, as having that freedom to express ourselves when we believe that wrong is being done to us. Now, for an instant, just for a fraction of an instant, if this particular law was—and I hate to say it—indeed appropriate, do you not think that that information somehow would have been trickled to the individuals that were coming out so that they know their appropriate actions and they know that if A happens, B is going to be the result? That was not done. Those essential notifications were not taken upon by this government to notify those individuals.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke really touched on something that I remember: the attitude. The attitude that was there then is the same attitude that is there now, which is why this government seems to be really disconnected with what is happening in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, the Minister of Rural Affairs, the member for Nipissing and also the member for Algoma–Manitoulin for their comments. It was a long address; I'm just glad they stayed awake.

I just want to say to the Minister of Rural Affairs that the SDG Highlanders, the Glens—my father was a member of that regiment, the Glens. I got to know a few of those folks over the years in my time here as well, and it is something that I think—we'll soon lose that opportunity to speak to someone who actually experienced that, and it's going to be a tremendous loss when that happens. History can record things, and we can have archived stories of battles, but having been the generation that followed that greatest generation, we've had a wonderful opportunity and experience to live among those people to whom we can never, ever repay what they've done for us. So I thank the member for his comments on that.

Again, to reiterate, we're going to support the bill, Mr. Speaker, because it's about time. But I cannot express any more strongly how I feel about how wrong the government was to conduct itself in the way it did at the time. They may have believed that what they were doing was necessary, but they didn't take that time for sober second thought, and we have to take the measures to ensure that actions like that never happen again.

Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from—I'm sorry; the Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** "The member for Peterborough" is okay, Mr. Speaker, because I'll always be that to my constituents back home.

An opportunity to speak this afternoon on Bill 51, and it's funny: The other day, I was rereading Ted Sorensen's book called *Counselor*, when he was one of the advisers to President John Kennedy. In the early part of the book, Ted Sorensen has a paragraph about the Bay of Pigs,

Ted Sorensen took some advice from Edward R. Murrow, and of course Edward R. Murrow was one of the American media giants in the 1950s and 1960s. Mr. Murrow's advice to Ted Sorensen as counsellor to President Kennedy was this advice: "An error does not become a mistake until you've refused to correct it." Then Mr. Sorensen, in his advice to the President—of course, President Kennedy went on television and admitted his error at the Bay of Pigs and took full responsibility for that.

Mr. Speaker, I see Bill 51 in that kind of context, so let's look at the historical perspective for a moment. In 1939, the Germans were conquering most of Europe. There were two legislative acts that were brought in in Canada. Here in Ontario, it was the Public Works Protection Act, brought in to provide the authority to protect utilities and other key pieces of infrastructure because of the potential of Nazi saboteurs coming across the Great Lakes to here in Ontario, because, of course, we know that the Americans didn't enter the Second World War until after November 7, 1941, with Pearl Harbor.

1740

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** December.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** In Ottawa, of course, the government of the day, Mackenzie King, at the advent of the war breaking out—Canada, I think, declared war on September 10, 1939, and Great Britain on September 1, within those days—the federal Parliament brought in the War Measures Act, which would provide special powers in order to secure installations right across Canada in the event, again, of espionage and saboteurs.

We'll fast-forward to October 1970, which was the October Crisis in the province of Quebec. Pierre Elliott Trudeau was Prime Minister, and he invokes the War Measures Act to give police forces, primarily in Quebec but indeed right across Canada, special powers because of the kidnapping of James Cross, who was consul general for Great Britain in Montreal. We know of the tragic murder of Pierre Laporte, who was Minister of Labour in the provincial government of then-Premier Robert Bourassa.

An interesting side note, Mr. Speaker, is that my late mother was then a nursing supervisor at St. Joseph's Hospital in Peterborough. Lakefield College is just to the north of Peterborough. Often, members of the European royal families would send their sons and daughters to Lakefield College School. Prince Andrew of the current royal family in Great Britain, the House of Windsor, actually went to Lakefield College School. But to tell this story, there was a member of the Spanish royal family who had an attack of appendicitis. That individual was brought to St. Joseph's Hospital in Peterborough. My mom was the night supervisor. At that particular time, that individual from the Spanish royal family—it was during the October Crisis—actually was protected by two RCMP officers through the War Measures Act, because they thought that, after the kidnapping of James Cross, there was the potential that members of European royal

families might be the target. So here is this individual, a prince, who came to Peterborough and had security guards from the RCMP because it was at the height of the October Crisis at that particular time.

We then fast-forward to 12 years later. The gentleman that brought in the War Measures Act in October 1970, Prime Minister Trudeau—we just celebrated, the other day, the 31st anniversary of the patriation of the Constitution and indeed the bringing to Canada of what we're also very proud of, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. So it's interesting that the Prime Minister who brought in the War Measures Act—special powers—some 12 years later brings in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms through that particular process.

Subsequently, through a number of governments in Ottawa, they brought in a new piece of legislation that fit the times in order to prevent terrorist activity here in Canada. Bill 51 is part and parcel of that; no question. At that particular time, we had world leaders through the G8 and G20, and we were encumbered with the responsibility of providing security for those world leaders that attended the G8 and the G20. We took that security challenge as a very important thing to do, to make sure that we provided the necessary security. Thank God, nothing happened, but if something did happen, there would have been fundamental questions of whether we had taken the appropriate action to provide security for those people who were here in Toronto.

I think some of the people in the third party have raised a very legitimate question: Was having a G20 summit in the heart of Canada's financial district in downtown Toronto the wisest course of action at that particular time? Some have suggested that it should have been held out at Downsview, which would have been a more isolated area, an area where providing security would have had fewer challenges. But of course we all recognize in this House that hindsight is always 20/20.

I think you really have to take some time to really think about the assessment of the security risk. I remember, during my time as a city councillor in Peterborough—I had the privilege of serving from 1985 to 2003. Once or twice a year, of course, the Peterborough Lakefield police would come to city council and they would provide us with an intelligence update in terms of what potential security threats are out there. I think you really get an appreciation when those very brave men and women, who put on the uniform each and every day to provide police services to protect us—so you get the sense, when you go through those briefings, of the kinds of challenges that may be faced at a city level, a municipal level. Of course, we know the security risks that a G8 or G20 can bring to a community.

But one of the things in the context of the discussion this afternoon about Bill 51, as I mentioned earlier in one of my two-minute responses, is that this past week police forces in Canada, in Ontario, through superb intelligence, were able to thwart a potential terrorist attack. There was going to be perhaps a bombing—I think the intent was very clear—of a Via Rail train, which, of course, we all



thank God it didn't happen, but there could have been significant deaths and injuries, and it would have brought about some challenges and the loss of economic activity and other day-to-day activities. So we want to thank those men and women that were involved over the last probably number of weeks, months and perhaps years, that were tracking these individuals. That gets to the heart of why we certainly need Bill 51 in terms of providing the appropriate legislative framework in terms of security here in Ontario.

I always get the opportunity to correct my record, and indeed the Americans came into the war on December 7, 1941, which was the invasion and the attack on Pearl Harbor, and as FDR said so eloquently, a day of infamy that would be forever recorded in the annals of American history.

I do get questions from time to time—Darlington is about 45 to 50 kilometres south of Peterborough—in terms of the security around that particular nuclear generation facility. Of course, in Peterborough we are the headquarters for the GE Hitachi nuclear division, which on its own accord has a level of security in terms of people that are entering that particular plant on Monaghan Road each and every day. There's a companion operation in Arnprior, Ontario, that actually does the pellets that find themselves into the fuel bundles that ultimately end up in both Darlington and Pickering, and indeed Bruce.

We are, over the last little while—this bill, in its previous version, of course went to committee. There was the standing committee that did a clause-by-clause review of then-Bill 34, which is Bill 51 now. There were a lot of amendments that were made in order to strengthen this particular bill. We wanted to look at protection of our courts, protection of our nuclear facilities, of course—very, very important. Ontario, the province of Quebec and the province of New Brunswick are the three provinces in Canada that have nuclear facilities, and we are very concerned to bring about the appropriate protections for these facilities in Ontario. Of course, all three of them are surrounded by—Darlington and of course Pickering are within the GTA, and Bruce is up in the beautiful area of Huron–Bruce, which I learned this week is the lovely west coast of the province of Ontario. The member from Huron–Bruce was very kind and very gracious to point that out during my wonderful visit to Wingham, Ontario, last Monday.

1750

So what happened at committee, through the good work of the opposition and indeed the third party, to make sure that this bill, the latest version of Bill 51, would be consistent with what we know in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code, which are very, very important? When you look at those two things, the Charter of Rights and Freedom, like medicare, of course helped to define what being a Canadian is all about today, and the Ontario Human Rights Code—very important. I think it was originally brought in—somebody will correct the record—by former Pre-

mier John Roberts, and then of course enhanced under Premier Bill Davis.

I think it's important that we get rid of and repeal an act that came about in 1939 under circumstances that today are much different. So, by working together in this Legislature, we have now put together Bill 51. Bill 51 will be sent to committee again, so there will be a second opportunity to look at some additional amendments to make this bill even stronger—a product of the good work on all sides of this Legislature.

I just have a few more points to make. Bill 51—after the great work from people on all sides, we now have a new, broad definition of a “public work,” which includes railways and other transportation infrastructure, public buildings, electricity generating facilities and the ability to designate additional works as public works, if need be; the ability to appoint guards with powers of a peace officer for the purpose of protecting a public work; additional powers for guards and peace officers to demand identification, conduct warrantless searches and refuse permission to enter a public work; and for the use of force to exclude a person from a public work etc.

These changes were brought about through the good work of the Ombudsman in the province of Ontario, the Honourable André Marin, and of course the work of a former Chief Justice of the province of Ontario, the Honourable Roy McMurtry, who I think we recognize now has been a leader not only as an MPP in this Legislature but as a former Attorney General in the province of Ontario, and has been called upon from time to time over the last number of years to provide insight and advice on a number of issues. Of course we asked His Honour Roy McMurtry to do a bit of review of the Public Works Protection Act. His recommendations and indeed the recommendations from the Ombudsman found their way into Bill 34 and subsequently into the new version of Bill 34, which is Bill 51.

As I said, when we conclude debate from all sides of the House, this bill will make its way to committee. There will be the opportunity to make some additional amendments and bring this bill back to the House for third reading and then finally royal assent. I think there is indeed a consensus that we want to get this bill passed and allow all individuals across the province of Ontario to see the increased accountability and transparency that Bill 51 has to offer.

When you look at section 2 of this bill and its amendments to the Police Services Act, this will fundamentally help, as I said previously, those brave men and women who put on the uniform each and every day, and through schedule 2, sections (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e), provides great clarity for those brave men and women doing their job each and every day. That's what they're asking of us. Police officers ask us to provide clarity for the job that they do each and every day.

Part (a) talks about “requiring a person who is entering or attempting to enter premises where court proceedings are conducted, or who is on such premises, to identify himself or herself and to provide information related to

assessing whether the person poses a security risk”—a very reasonable proposition.

Part (b): “searching a person who is entering or attempting to enter premises where court proceedings are conducted, or who is on such premises, as well as the vehicle in which the person is driving and any property in the person’s custody or care”—again, a very reasonable section.

Part (c): “searching, using reasonable force if necessary, a person in custody who is on premises where court proceedings are conducted or is being transported to or from such premises and any property in the person’s custody or care”—again, a very reasonable proposition.

I think when this gets third reading and royal assent after, again, it has been looked at by committee—and of course, committee work is so very important in a minority government, to have all sides call upon some expert witnesses to come forward, to make sure at the end of the day that we got this right. Getting this right is so important, providing clarity for police forces across the province of Ontario: the OPP, the RCMP detachments that are located here in Ontario, and indeed all of our municipal police forces that all of us here in the Legislature develop great working relationships with. We work with them each and every day, and the tremendous contributions that they make in their community.

Mr. Speaker, I’m very proud to have this opportunity to make a few comments this afternoon.

Indeed, I think one of the members opposite talked about the security challenges of the Pan Am/Parapan games, which we are so happy to be hosting in Ontario in 2015. That will be a challenge. Let’s be frank. It will be a challenge for our police forces to make sure that there’s going to be adequate security at that event and to make sure that all of the world that will be coming to Ontario gets to enjoy the Pan Am Games.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. Let’s get Bill 51 passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being close to 6 o’clock, this debate will pick up where it left off.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House now be adjourned is deemed to have been made.

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

### ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member for Kenora–Rainy River has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given yesterday by the Premier. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the Premier will have five minutes to reply.

Member for Kenora–Rainy River.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Yesterday, I asked the Premier a very important question. I asked her what steps this province is willing to take to ensure that First Nation communities no longer have to declare states of emergency to ensure they receive essential services that every other community in this province takes for granted.

I would like to start off by saying that I believe we have common ground in agreeing that the situation in Ontario’s Far North is not acceptable. While this debate was sparked by a declaration of emergency in Neskantaga First Nation, I believe it’s fair to say that, in reality, all communities in the Far North face very similar positions.

Last year, it was Attawapiskat who declared a state of emergency as a result of a housing crisis, a crisis that exists across the entire Far North. At the same time, children in Cat Lake wrote open letters to their family members asking them to end the cycle of dependency and drug use that exists in their community. First Nation communities across the Far North are reporting addiction rates of 50% to 85%. This is an epidemic.

In 2011, it was Pikangikum who declared a state of emergency, as a result of a lack of safe drinking water in their community.

#### 1800

In 2010, Fort Hope asked the government for assistance with their prescription drug abuse.

In 2009, it was Payukotayno First Nation seeking support for a suicide crisis of their own.

There are many more. Despite the alarming similarities, each state of emergency has been treated as a singular crisis, but I know—as the former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Premier, knows—that this is not the case.

This is not a partisan issue. This is an issue of respect, fairness and human decency. We all know that a large part of the blame lies with the federal government. I recognize and I understand that. But, that said, I believe that we as legislators in the province of Ontario need to look at what is occurring within our borders and say that we will not accept these conditions regardless of jurisdiction.

I cannot look at the conditions that exist in these communities and condone a jurisdictional fight, because that’s how nothing gets done. While the province and the federal government fight over who is responsible, the residents become victims of neglect and indifference.

Yesterday the Premier stated that the problem is complex, and I will admit that the cause of the current suicide crisis in Neskantaga is multifaceted. This includes a high rate of prescription drug abuse, sexual abuse, lack of access to clean drinking water, inadequate policing, no access to mental health and addictions counselling, and more.

Last year I read in this House letters from children in another First Nation community outlining the sense of despair and hopelessness they felt because of the lack of proper educational facilities in their community. That sense of hopelessness changed when those same children found out they had been approved for a new school—



from despair to joy, simply by being told that their basic needs would be met. That's what I'm seeking from the province.

In Ontario, we need a strategy regardless of what the federal government does or does not do. People living in our province's Far North are citizens of Ontario, and the province needs to step up to ensure that these citizens have their most basic needs met. We can fight about who picks up the tab later.

We need to close the gap between First Nations and non-First Nations education funding; even Don Drummond recognized that.

We need to ensure that First Nations in the Far North have adequate housing. Nobody should be forced to live in an overcrowded shack with tarps instead of doors in a climate where temperatures frequently plummet as low as minus 50 for half of the year.

Communities need support for community policing initiatives.

They need proper access to health care and addiction services that do not currently exist.

Communities need access to infrastructure funding that will allow them to connect to the hydro grid, which will allow them to build housing and other facilities such as community centres that will improve the quality of life for the people who are living there.

People living in these communities also need access to clean and reliable drinking water, sewage and water treatment plants, and a strategy that will help them clean up contaminated sites left behind by mining companies.

I am under no illusions that these changes can happen overnight. Premier, what I'm looking to you for and your government for is a firm commitment to improve the lives of all citizens of Ontario, including the people living in First Nation communities. I want your personal commitment that this government will take immediate steps to treat First Nations people in a manner that is consistent with all other citizens of this province and to address these very serious issues in First Nation communities so we can prevent the declaration of future states of emergency. That is what I'm asking you to do, and I believe it is not an unfair request.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Premier, five minutes.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to commend the member for Kenora—Rainy River for her advocacy on this file because it's so important. It's important to the people of Ontario. It's important to the people in her riding. I think she knows that this is a very high priority for me. She and I have been in communities together. She knows that I have travelled the north in my capacity as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, but in my capacity as Minister of Education, and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Minister of Transportation I have travelled to many of the communities in the north, many of the communities that she mentioned—Pikangikum; I've been to Webequie; I've been to Grassy Narrows, Wabigoon

and Attawapiskat, and I'm very aware of the complex needs of many of the communities in the north.

I want to talk to the specifics of Neskantaga for a moment and then I want to talk generally about our commitment. Before I begin to do that, I want to express my heartfelt condolences to the Neskantaga First Nation as they deal with the recent deaths of two young members of their community. No community in Ontario should have to deal with those high rates of suicide. There's no explanation for that. This is something that we have to address.

Both the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Minister Zimmer, and I have spoken with Chief Peter Moonias about ways that we can support the community going forward. Through our social emergency protocol and daily meetings of inter-ministerial and intergovernmental teams, we've responded quickly and we've taken decisive actions to support Neskantaga First Nation.

On April 19, Minister Zimmer informed Chief Moonias that the Ministry of Children and Youth Services will provide funding to Nodin Child and Family Intervention Services, which is a community mental health agency, to support Neskantaga First Nation with a mental health trauma team that will work with the community and its elders to provide support. What Chief Moonias said to me when I spoke to him is that they need people on the ground to actually interact with members of the community in an ongoing way, not flying in for a short period of time but actually being rooted in the community and dealing with issues and getting to know the people so that there is a relationship.

We've also committed to work with Neskantaga First Nation, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Health Canada, and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to support an emergency coordinator to coordinate crisis response activities for the next few months in the community. Again, I will just say that over my time in my previous ministries, I learned that often it was coordination of programs—because there are inter-jurisdictional issues, and so that coordination is very important.

So we continue to monitor this crisis, coordinating efforts across provincial ministries, working with the federal departments and the First Nation to explore other ways that we can provide support and assistance.

I want to get to the root of the member opposite's question, which is, what can we do to prevent emergencies like this from happening in other places? Whether it's First Nations education, First Nations health care or on-reserve infrastructure, I'm committed to working with my colleagues, with the federal government and our First Nation partners to make sure that we address these issues. That's why we work closely with First Nations and aboriginal agencies to support prevention and treatment programs that focus on First Nation youth.

I'm very concerned about the high level of youth suicide in these communities. We believe the best way to help reduce the high rate of suicide among First Nation youth is to adopt culturally appropriate prevention and

intervention services in Ontario's First Nation communities. The conditions that lead to this kind of despair need to be addressed, and our government takes that responsibility extremely seriously.

I know that the Ministry of Children and Youth Services is working closely with First Nations communities across Ontario to find meaningful ways of addressing this serious problem. Ontario's Child and Youth Mental Health and Addiction Strategy provides services and supports for vulnerable children and youth, including those from First Nations communities. In 2012, in fact, children and youth services hired 80 new aboriginal mental health and addiction workers in high-needs communities, which are expected to provide additional direct, culturally appropriate support to 4,000 more aboriginal children and youth each year.

Our comprehensive Child and Youth Mental Health and Addiction Strategy will also implement an aboriginal mental health worker training program to increase the supply of trained mental health workers in aboriginal

communities. It will expand and enhance tele-mental health services to provide specialized expertise to serve children in rural, remote and under-served communities.

As we move forward on these issues, we're going to need to continue to work with our partners: the federal government, the provincial government, First Nations communities.

Because of the member opposite's advocacy, I know we'll be able to continue to work on this issue. She knows how complex it is. She has a relationship with the communities, as we do. It's only by working together and not letting wedges be driven between us that we're going to be able to resolve the problems that are so acute in these communities.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1809.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margaret R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short









*Continued from back cover*

### **Power plants**

Mr. Steve Clark .....	1484
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1485
Hon. John Milloy .....	1485

### **Health care**

Mr. Paul Miller .....	1485
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1485

### **Hospital funding**

Mr. Phil McNeely .....	1485
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1486
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1486

### **Power plants**

Mr. Michael Harris .....	1486
Hon. John Milloy .....	1486

### **Environmental research**

Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1487
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1487
Hon. Laurel C. Broten .....	1487

### **Retirement homes**

Mr. Bas Balkissoon .....	1488
Hon. Mario Sergio .....	1488

### **Power plants**

Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1488
Hon. John Milloy .....	1488

### **Winter highway maintenance**

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	1489
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	1489

### **Visitor**

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	1489
----------------------	------

### **Ontario budget**

Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1490
--------------------------	------

### **Decorum in chamber**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1490
-------------------------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1490
-------------------------	------

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **World Meningitis Day**

Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1490
------------------------------	------

### **Organ donation**

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	1490
--------------------------	------

### **Armenian genocide**

Mr. Steven Del Duca .....	1490
---------------------------	------

### **Flooding in Bancroft**

Mr. Todd Smith .....	1491
----------------------	------

### **Wally Mole**

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	1491
-------------------------	------

### **World Meningitis Day**

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1491
--------------------------	------

### **Robotics team**

Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1492
-------------------------	------

### **Health care**

Mrs. Amrit Mangat .....	1492
-------------------------	------

### **Community awards**

Mr. Jim McDonell .....	1492
------------------------	------

### **Private members' public business**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1492
-------------------------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Birthplace of the National Flag of Canada Act, 2013, Bill 57, Mr. Clark / Loi de 2013 sur le berceau du drapeau national du Canada, projet de loi 57, M. Clark**

First reading agreed to .....	1493
Mr. Steve Clark .....	1493

### **Meningitis Awareness Day Act, 2013, Bill 58, Mr. Singh / Loi de 2013 sur le Jour de la sensibilisation à la méningite, projet de loi 58, M. Singh**

First reading agreed to .....	1493
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1493

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Environmental protection**

Mr. John O'Toole .....	1493
------------------------	------

### **Services for the developmentally disabled**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1494
------------------------	------

### **Agri-food industry**

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1494
------------------------------	------

### **Algonquin land claim**

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	1494
--------------------------	------

### **Government services**

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1494
--------------------------	------

### **Industrie agroalimentaire**

M. Bob Delaney .....	1495
----------------------	------

### **Fishing regulations**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette .....	1495
------------------------------	------

### **Dog ownership**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1495
------------------------	------

<b>Family caregiver leave</b>	
Ms. Soo Wong .....	1495
<b>Workplace insurance</b>	
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1496
<b>Ontario College of Trades</b>	
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1496
<b>Electoral boundaries</b>	
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	1496
<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	1496

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

<b>Security for Courts, Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2013, Bill 51, Mrs. Meilleur / Loi de 2013 sur la sécurité des tribunaux, des centrales électriques et des installations nucléaires, projet de loi 51, Mme Meilleur</b>	
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	1497
Ms. Soo Wong .....	1499
Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	1501
Mr. John Vanthof.....	1501
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1502
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1502
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	1502
Mr. John Yakabuski.....	1502
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	1509
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1509
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1510
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1510
Mr. John Yakabuski.....	1510
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1510
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	1513

## **ADJOURNMENT DEBATE / DÉBAT SUR LA MOTION D'AJOURNEMENT**

<b>Aboriginal programs and services</b>	
Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1513
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1514



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 24 April 2013 / Mercredi 24 avril 2013

### Wearing of Pins

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1467
-----------------------------	------

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013, Bill 14, Mrs. Jeffrey / Loi de 2013 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif, projet de loi 14, Mme Jeffrey

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	1467
Hon. John Gerretsen .....	1469
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1469
Mr. Jonah Schein .....	1469
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1469
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	1470
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	1470
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1472
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1472
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	1472
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	1473
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	1473
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	1473
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	1475
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1475
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1475
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	1476
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	1476
Miss Monique Taylor .....	1476
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1476
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1477
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1477
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	1477
Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1477
Miss Monique Taylor .....	1477
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1478

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Steve Clark .....	1478
Mr. Paul Miller .....	1478
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1478

Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	1478
Mr. Bill Mauro .....	1478
Mr. Ted Chudleigh .....	1478
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1478
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1478
Hon. Linda Jeffrey .....	1478
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1478
Hon. Laurel C. Broten .....	1478
Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1478
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1478
Mr. Ted Chudleigh .....	1478
Mr. Grant Crack .....	1478
Mr. Frank Klees .....	1478
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1478
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1478

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Manufacturing jobs

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1479
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1479

#### Manufacturing jobs

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1480
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1480
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	1480

#### Automobile insurance

Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1481
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1481
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1482

#### Power plants

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1482
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	1482
Hon. John Milloy .....	1482

#### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1483
Hon. John Milloy .....	1483

#### Cancer treatment

Mme France Gélinas .....	1483
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1483

#### Mining industry

Mrs. Amrit Mangat .....	1484
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	1484

*Continued on inside back cover*

20N  
1  
D23



No. 31

N° 31

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 25 April 2013

Jeudi 25 avril 2013



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 25 April 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 25 avril 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### LOCAL FOOD ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 SUR LES ALIMENTS LOCAUX

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 23, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 /  
Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant la Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's always an honour and a privilege to rise in this House and to rise on behalf of the phenomenal people of Parkdale–High Park, where we have done much to encourage the eating and the production of local food.

I want to send a shout-out right off the top to West End Food Co-op. It started with a few groups—a few very, very persuasive and committed volunteers—and has now grown into a farmers' market every week and its own store that operates week-long in Parkdale–High Park and that does phenomenal work. But, Mr. Speaker, we're here to speak about a bill, and the bill, unfortunately, doesn't help them.

Just so people at home who haven't read the bill know, all the bill really does is set aside a week called Local Food Week. Quite frankly this bill, so badly and ill-prepared, falls on the same week as Agriculture Week. So the agriculture minister, aka the Premier, who introduced this bill, I'm sure wanting to open up some rapport with farmers, in fact did just the opposite and bit the hand that she wanted to shake by introducing this in the first place.

Then again, local food—even the words—really is more a downtown Toronto issue than it is a rural issue. Most farmers don't have a problem eating local food. This is a bill aimed at the chattering classes in downtown Toronto. Let me tell you that those folk in downtown Toronto who care about local food have done way more than this bill does. They've actually worked hard to start co-ops. My own father was one of the founding members of Karma Co-op, one of the first co-ops ever for local food in Toronto. That started in the 1970s. So from the

1970s on, Torontonians have been active around the local food movement. Only now, in 2013, does the government pick up the term and introduce a bill that really just declares a week called Local Food Week.

This is absolutely the *modus operandi*—has been for 10 years—of the Liberal government: to follow rather than initiate, to come in after the fact rather than lead. They've done this on every file imaginable: introduce a bill that's more spin than substance. I'm thinking here of the poverty bill, 25-in-5. This is a government that's actually on track to increase poverty over their 10-year span by 25% rather than decrease it, but yet, there's the bill. In that case, the bill was two pages long and simply said, "We're committed to decreasing poverty by 25% in five years." Absolutely no way of doing that, no means to do it and no purpose behind it or will to do it; just a bill.

Here we have a bill, the Local Food Act—no procurement policies involved in the bill, no call on even the government and government ministries to actually buy local food, nothing practical, Mr. Speaker, nothing of real substance in this bill, just a week. Just a week declared for local food. In fact we're sitting in a place, Mr. Speaker, where if you got your coffee from the cafeteria this morning you were drinking Seattle's Best. Only in the province of Ontario, in the government of Ontario, would a government have the gumption to bring forward a local food bill while drinking Seattle's Best coffee in their own cafeteria. Even the words alone—I mean, surely, surely we can do better than that. But yet this bill does not.

Other instances of this government doing exactly the same thing: My colleague here was part of an all-party committee on mental health and addictions; 23 recommendations, of which three have been implemented. Twenty simply go by the wayside. The social assistance review: again, a review that cost a lot of money to taxpayers, just like the mental health committee cost a lot of money to taxpayers. What came out of all this? Virtually nothing.

This government not only brings in bills with words only and no substance but actually studies issues rather than acting on them, and we see this over and over again. We're seeing this with the great scandals this government has brought forward: Ornge, eHealth, the gas plant problems—all of these studied by committees, and at the end, the committees will make recommendations. Mr. Speaker, do we really have any confidence that this government will act on any of those recommendations? I think it's safe to say: absolutely none—absolutely none.

So here's the latest, the latest spin, the latest public relations announcement passing itself off as a legislative action—a bill—when really it's just a public relations an-



nouncement destined for those folk in downtown Toronto who want to hear the words “local food.” Well, you heard it. You got it. Downtown Toronto, you’ve heard: Kathleen Wynne has said local food is important. Meanwhile, the reality in the field is this: About 80% of the fresh fruits and vegetables we eat in this province come from somewhere else. That’s the actual reality on the ground. The average carrot travels over 3,000 kilometres to get to our markets, even though we could grow all the produce and we could, you know, eat here.

But there’s nothing in the bill to change that whatsoever. Not one iota, not one word in the bill actually addresses the problem of procuring local food, eating it or getting it into our markets. It’s just a week. I was laughing with one of my colleagues that maybe instead of named weeks and named days, this government could actually ask us to wear hats with words on them like “local food” one week and something else the next; maybe “mental health.” It would do about as much good. It would be cuter—at least we’d get a good laugh if we all wore a hat saying “local food”—than if this government brought forward a bill.

But this is no laughing matter, Mr. Speaker. This is real. You know, we are living on a planet whose days are numbered unless we act. We’re living with an agricultural community whose days are numbered if we don’t act to help them. And yet we get local food, the week; not local food action, not local food procurement policy, not local food regulation. No, we get local food, the week. Well, maybe local food, the hat, might be cuter; that’s all I’m saying.

And the problem is, Mr. Speaker, that this is 10 years of this, 10 long years of bills just like this in every field you can imagine, whether it’s mental health, poverty, food. Name it, and this government has brought forward a bill naming a week when they should have acted, naming a day when they should have done something.

I think Ontarians are beginning to wake up. I know in my riding, all the folk who actually do something around local food, like the West End Food Co-op, which has done so much in our own area, all the local farmers’ markets that happen, all the local community gardens that happen in my riding—all of them did it without the help of this government; no help from this government whatsoever in all of that. When I told all these folk about the Local Food Act and what it actually implied, that there’s going to be a week named Local Food Week, none of them were impressed. None of them saw this as a step forward. None of them were fooled.

None of them thought that just because “local food,” the words, come out of the Premier’s mouth, anything much is going to change to help them in their endeavours or in their lives. Not our local food producers, who just lost their Agriculture Week, which spoke far more to their concerns—they weren’t impressed—and not those who sit on the West End Food Co-op, some of whom were invited to a movie yesterday that none of the rest of us, by the way, got to see on local food. None of them were impressed by what this government’s doing. They

see it for what it is: spin, pure and utter spin, a public relations announcement instead of real government policy that would actually change the lives of the people that it impacts. And so it goes.

**0910**

This, again, from a government that’s supposed to be different—it’s supposed to be different. We weren’t supposed to get the same old same old that we got under the last Premier, Dalton McGuinty. We’re supposed to get something new. But really, what have we seen? We’ve seen the same old bills that were lost during prorogation come forward, and this new bill—yet again, the same kind of bill we’ve seen for 10 years, a bill that says something and does absolutely nothing.

What could they do? I’ve got one minute left to say. Well, we in the New Democratic Party have long since said, “Let’s look at our procurement policies as a government, as ministries.” We spend millions of dollars every year on food. Why don’t we make a procurement policy that requires that we spend at least 25% of that on locally grown food? But that would actually be something; that would actually do something. Instead, they want to name a week.

Again, speaking as a downtown Torontonion, we’re not fooled. I can tell you, the agricultural corridor is not fooled. In fact, they’re upset. They lost their Agriculture Week that this bill runs roughshod over just because whoever designed it didn’t check the calendar correctly. Actually, it helps absolutely no one.

Again, a shout-out to those in the field who are actually doing something: West End Food Co-op, Masaryk-Cowan HOPE Garden and all the others who actually do something, unlike this Liberal government. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I’d like to thank the member from Parkdale–High Park for her comments, but, yet again, I didn’t see anything positive really coming out of there. I was at—

**Interjection:** It’s unfortunate.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It’s unfortunate, yes. I was at Sustain Ontario, the reception here yesterday, and I can tell you there was a lot of enthusiasm in that room—the people who were here supporting Foodland Ontario, supporting this government’s support of Foodland Ontario over the last nine years.

I want to comment on Agriculture Week versus Local Food Week. What I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, with regard to that is, we attempted to put that week at a time when we thought, and think, that it would be complementary to Agriculture Week. The opposition, obviously, thinks differently.

I want to talk about the comment that she raises with regard to 80% of fruits and vegetables coming from somewhere else. I’ve spoken to retailers. I was at the Foodland Ontario Retailer Awards a couple of weeks back, and I can tell you what they’re telling me is that they need to make sure that they have enough product on

the shelves at all times. Consumer demand is paramount for profits for retail, such as Sobeys and Metro. I think it's no secret that I was fortunate enough to be a part of those retailer awards. I'm in the flyer presenting and congratulating those who do so well at showcasing local foods in those larger chains.

They're telling me that there is volatility in Ontario when it comes to ensuring that there's an adequate supply. Last year, for example, we experienced an early spring. Buds in the fruit trees came out and crops were damaged. So how are we supposed to ever legislate targets, which the opposition and the third party are suggesting? It's just not possible here in Ontario.

I have quite a bit more I'd like to say in congratulating the good work that people do in local food, and I guess I'll have to wait.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Our member for Parkdale–High Park gave us a kind of morning wake-up call from the urban perspective. I used to have a rooster like that, but it would crow about three hours earlier to get us going. I hated that rooster—but I don't hate Cheri. You crow at 9:15; that's more reasonable.

The member opposite indicated that there was not much positive in the presentation, and I agree with both parties: There isn't much positive to say about this legislation. There are shortcomings—a lot that is not said. Sure, we're talking about declaring yet another week, a Local Food Week. That has been done. That was done—I think it was 1998. Bert Johnson, an MPP in this House for a number of years, brought in Agriculture Week. As I recall, I attended the launch down at Toronto city hall.

The member for Parkdale–High Park mentioned somewhat facetiously, “Well, there will probably be another hat, a local food hat or a Local Food Week hat.” I've probably got a hat that says that; I think I've got about 150 tractor hats, in just about every vehicle that I own and every building that I own. Sometimes those slogans work. I'm sure the members opposite will probably show up at the plowing match with their red rubber boots and their Local Food Week hats. That's one prediction that I will make, so we'll stay tuned for that one.

Sometimes the slogans work. I think of the power behind that expression “farmers feed cities,” which again, is something the member from Parkdale–High Park is fully aware of.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to join the debate this morning on the Local Food Act and to comment on remarks made by the member from Parkdale–High Park. I agree with her in so many ways that this is just the tip of the iceberg. This is symbolic and little else. The symbolism is really important if we could put some substance behind it.

I brought a friend of mine into the Legislature earlier this week who has been an advocate for sustainable food for years. She spent a decade of her life working on these

issues. She was very interested—she had never been in this building—and she sat in the gallery and listened to debate. She said, “What are people talking about? They are just listing food items. They are just listing the names of markets and gardens. Where's the substance of this bill?” She thought she was missing something. I had the misfortune to say, “No, this is just the quality of debate in this House at this moment.”

There is so much that can be done that should be done to support agriculture in Ontario, to support more sustainable forms of agriculture. There are actual policy initiatives that could be done. If you look to Quebec, Quebec is supporting young farmers. People are coming out of school—because the older generation is packing up and the younger generation don't know if they can farm—and Quebec is supporting farmers there. We're not doing that, and there's nothing in this bill to suggest that.

Folks like Sustain Ontario have talked about the need for actual education around food. They've made those suggestions. They were here yesterday. There's nothing in this act that's actually going to talk about how to do that in our schools. I read something this morning about farmers saying, “We should have home economics in our schools.” That's not here, Speaker.

There is so much more that needs to be done. As a Toronto member, I've had the opportunity to travel a little bit in my time here and to go to northern Ontario, where people don't have access to affordable food. Why don't we have in this bill something that will support northern communities and northern aboriginal communities that are struggling with the health impacts of not having that access? I wish we could elevate the debate here and put some real substance in this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I'm pleased to rise to speak about Bill 36. I do recognize the member from Parkdale–High Park and her comments. The bill is not just about the city of Toronto. As a member from the city of Toronto, I don't believe this bill is about just the city of Toronto.

It is clearly laid out, Mr. Speaker—the three purposes of the bill. So I'm going to remind the member opposite. It says clearly here that the purposes of this act are to:

“1. To foster successful and resilient local food economies and systems throughout Ontario.

“2. To increase awareness of local food in Ontario, including the diversity of local food.

“3. To encourage the development of new markets for local food.”

Mr. Speaker, when we have international guests visiting Ontario, they consistently say how proud they are, how safe our food is and what good quality our food is.

I know this is the right thing to do. There's no question we need to raise the level of conversation, because we know the agriculture-food industry is one of the largest in this province, and each one of us in this House is very proud of this sector.

0920

More importantly, I remember yesterday morning attending the breakfast with OFA members. They have



told us, "Please, when you bring this bill through, put in some more substance about the whole issue of food literacy," which we can all do. As someone formerly from the Toronto District School Board, I already connected with them. So at the end of the day, there are things already being done about food literacy. The new term is not "home economics"; that's not sexy enough for young people to do. They like the fact that the technology piece and the food-cooking shows and food networks are bringing young people and encouraging food strategies, but also affordability and sustainability. This is the right thing to do: to champion this very successful sector.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Parkdale–High Park, you have two minutes for a response.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Thanks to everyone who weighed in on this debate. The member from Scarborough–Agin-court talked about how people love our food when they come to Ontario. Too bad 80% of it doesn't come from here, our fruits and vegetables. That's my point, Mr. Speaker. The point is that this bill does nothing to change the reality of food and local food in Ontario whatsoever. That's the point. Still, 80% of it is imported fruits and vegetables—fruits and vegetables that could be grown here, that could be marketed here. Still, the average carrot travels almost 4,000 kilometres to get to our market here. Still, this bill changes nothing. It changes nothing about what we eat even in this Legislature. It changes nothing about what governments buy or ministries buy. No wonder those who are involved in agriculture said, "Put some meat on the bones of this bill," because this bill is all bone, no meat. All it says is, "We encourage people to eat local food. Let's have a local food week."

We're going to use hours and hours of our time in this Legislature debating this bill—and yes, she's right: When it gets to committee, will we try to add something to it? Absolutely. But come on. It is the government's job to actually bring in legislation that changes people's lives and helps folk. This doesn't change anybody's life and it doesn't help anybody. Now they're relying on the opposition to make this bill into a bill, and not just a public relations statement. That's not governing. That's not leading. What is that? That is simply pandering.

The reason I raised downtown Toronto is because that's where local food has the greatest meaning. As I said, farmers already eat locally. It's about getting that local food to market, to these great capital centres of ours, including downtown Toronto.

So again, will we put meat on the bones of the bill? We'll try. That's all I can say about it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** For the sake of the 13.4 million people who call Ontario home and want to buy fresh Ontario local food for their families and businesses, and for sake of the 164,000 people whose jobs are generated by the Ontario farming sector, I'd hoped, and I think many of my PC colleagues and other colleagues in the

House had hoped, that we would be proven wrong when we said that Premier Wynne could not take on both the job of Premier and the job of agriculture—and food, let's not forget that part; it's critically important. Unfortunately, this window-dressing bill—and this is another one; we see examples of these window-dressing bills all the time—has proven both me and the rest of my PC caucus right.

During her leadership run, the Premier promised a strengthened Local Food Act. I know many in the food and agriculture industry were excited for this new act. Many in the industry and many in our caucus put forward concrete proposals for the act that would have strengthened our food system, increased access to local food and helped our agriculture sector, which continually struggles a little bit more every year.

In fact, I think most people in Ontario were happy to hear of a bill to support Ontario food. Obviously, promoting local food is a concept that I think everybody can get behind. As a father of two young children, I feel better feeding my kids food that I know has come from local Ontario farms. In fact, one of my daughter's best friends has a farm that's been given awards by the Premier: Nicholyn Farms. I make a point of going to Nicholyn Farms, to the little market that they have there for local food in Ontario. By "local" we mean 60 kilometres around the area, and that's all the beef and vegetables—you name it; they have it there, and it's the highest-quality food you could probably buy anywhere. A little more expensive, but it's better quality and you're supporting local food. That's supporting local food.

People like that. People like to buy local, they really do, if they're given the chance and the opportunity. A good example is the Foodland Ontario symbol, a part of a government program established by our party in 1997, and it's recognized by over 94% of grocery shoppers.

This bill does a lot less than what stakeholders need and want. It actually does very little of what it says it'll do, that being promoting local food. I know, the rest of the PC caucus knows and stakeholders also know that to support local food, we need to support Ontario farmers. So it's disappointing when Premier Wynne opted not to take the time to really listen to farmers and other stakeholders, as a Minister of Agriculture and Food should, and put forward a bill that actually addresses their concerns such as too much red tape, increasing energy costs and a horse racing industry that's on the ropes.

Instead she chose to put forward a bill that amounts to not much more than good intentions, and I'll give it that. This bill may be a good starting point. It aims to bring more to local food and encourages public sector institutions to buy local, and allows the Minister of Agriculture and Food to set goals or targets in respect to local food, even though there is no mention of what these goals and targets should be or aim at. We all know that if you want to have goals and targets, you'd better have them in mind. You'd better do better than just talking about them; you'd better actually have them so you can achieve them.

Furthermore, even though the bill states that the minister could consult with stakeholder organizations before

setting these goals and targets, whatever they may be, we worry that the minister, with so little experience in this industry, gets the final say in what these targets are and that the bill does not even define who the relevant organizations would be.

The bill also provides that the minister may direct a public sector organization to provide information regarding local food targets and steps that have been taken to achieve that goal. But, Speaker, the bill does little else. There is too much at stake in Ontario's agri-food industry for a Local Food Act that does almost nothing substantial to promote local food and to help the farmers who actually provide local food.

What's at stake? Promoting local food in Ontario should be taken more seriously by the Liberal government. This unsubstantial bill demonstrates that the Liberal government either doesn't really know or doesn't really realize the importance of the agriculture and food industry to the social and economic well-being of all of Ontario. This is further evidenced by the political campaign move by the Premier, who can't even get the title of the portfolio down properly.

Here are some of the facts about the industry which demonstrate why promoting local food is so important for Ontario: 25% of Canadian farms are actually located in Ontario; there are almost 52,000 farms and 75,000 farm operators in Ontario; and Ontario is renowned worldwide as a leader in safe, high-quality food and in agricultural innovations.

The potential to export and be self-sustaining. We have the potential to export and be self-sustaining, but Ontario imports exceed exports by about \$424 million. That makes no sense because we're the third-largest food producer in North America. Ontario's blessed with the majority—over 50%—of Canada's best agricultural land. Ontario raises the most chickens, has the most dairy cows in the country and is a major producer of corn, fruit, soybeans, nursery plants, flowers, vegetables, eggs, poultry, lamb, hogs, beef and dairy products. That's just about everything.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is the capital of beef.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is the capital of beef, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen sound says. There we go; there's some food promotion for you.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** There you go; there's local food promotion at its finest.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Even in Barrie we see examples of red tape. I want to give a little example of red tape in Barrie that just happened recently. We need to make it easier for businesses to promote local food, yet there's too much regulation leading to missed opportunities. There's actually a local hamburger restaurant in Alliston—some of us heard about this in the newspaper; it actually made the news. It's a town that neighbours Barrie, about a 25-minute drive from Barrie—whose owner knows the value of local Ontario food and is proud to use and advertise that it uses locally sourced products. It was

told to take down signs advertising this, because they were serving beer from a local brewery from Barrie. So in other words, they were told by this government, by this bureaucracy, that they couldn't advertise a beer made in Barrie as local. Yet it's only about 30 or 40 kilometres away. If that's not local, I don't know what is.

What is our definition of "local"? We sit in this House, representing all of Ontario. We should be sticking together and supporting each other, supporting our communities. To actually ask a restaurant to take down advertisements that they're serving local food when it's actually not local, it's 30 or 40 kilometres away, is splitting hairs, folks. We need to do what we can to support local food. That's not supporting local food.

**0930**

And it's not only that. If he doesn't take down the sign, he can be charged up to \$50,000. If you want to protect local food and you want to promote local food, let's start there: not punishing restaurants for advertising local food. It is counterintuitive; I just don't understand it. His other restaurant also sources food from communities in Ontario other than Alliston, and now he's worried that he has to stop promoting local foods.

I mean, let's start there. If you want to do a bill that actually makes sense and actually accomplishes what it says it's going to accomplish, why don't we start at the obvious spot and stop punishing local restaurants for advertising and selling local food? It makes sense, doesn't it? This one restaurateur wants to support local food, and he can't for fear of being charged a \$50,000 fine.

Let's pull our heads out of the sand here, folks. This is because of different definitions of "local food" federally and provincially. Provincially, local is all of Ontario; federally, it must be neighbouring municipalities. We need legislation tackling this, or more coordination between governments. That's your job, and you can't pass that on to another bureaucracy like you do with everything else, guys. It's nice that provincially we'll have an act to promote local food, if this passes, but what does that matter if businesses can't advertise Ontario food as local? It seems like bad oversight on behalf of the minister's office, and this is a huge loss of potential for local food here in Ontario.

We need to make it easier, not harder, for businesses to put Ontario food on the table and promote it in stores and restaurants. I know there's one restaurant in Barrie that just opened up called the Farmhouse, which is proudly serving nothing but local food, and if they are stymied from actually serving local food because the definition is that it's not in the city of Barrie, well, I'll tell you what: We don't have one farm in the city of Barrie. We have lots of them surrounding Barrie that feed us. If we can't promote that as being local, that's a crying shame.

Mr. Speaker, at most I can tell that this bill is a stepping stone. Again, I said I'll give it that: good intentions. But mostly it's just a missed opportunity. It has the potential, but there's still so much more to be done. In



our white paper, the PC Party has put forward concrete proposals to actually promote local food and agribusinesses, proposals that have taken into account the concerns and ideas of the people who understand the industry the best. It's unfortunate that the Minister of Agriculture and Food did not implement at least one of these real-world proposals into this bill. It's also unfortunate that the Premier, who's supposed to be representing Ontario farmers, has replaced Ontario Agriculture Week with Ontario Local Food Week, instead of keeping these two distinct, separate entities that properly mark their importance. Maybe it was just a careless oversight to complement a substance-lacking bill, but if oversights and pieces of unsubstantial legislation are indications of things to come from the Premier, as both the Minister of Agriculture and Food and as Premier, I think we have good reason to be more than a little concerned, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to be able to stand in the House on behalf of the residents of Timiskaming-Cochrane and make a few remarks on the remarks of the member from Barrie on the Local Food Act. I agreed with a lot of the points he brought up—not all of them, but a lot of them.

I think one of the biggest problems he brought up and that I'd like to expand on is that this bill says it would like to set goals and objectives, but it doesn't actually—there's no evidence of what these goals or objectives are going to be until three years after the passage of the bill. Quite frankly, is the legislation worth the paper it's written on, or should we expect to pass legislation that doesn't have goals and objectives as part of what you're striving for? This bill is very, very weak on that, and that's why those on this side of the House keep saying it's more promotional material—and it is. We're spending a lot of time talking about local food. I'm sure in the next campaign the government is going to spend a lot of time beating down the back roads talking about local food. But the problem is that the goals and objectives are somewhere way at the back. They don't even say what they are; they're going to talk about them.

I hear the member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell: "We can't do this because it might harm trade agreements," even though there are countries to the south of us, the States, and in the European Union who do have goals and objectives, who operate under much stricter trade rules than we do. So, once again, that's a red herring, and that one really, for those of us on this side of the House, is a big problem.

If it's worth having a goal, it's worth setting out what the goals and objectives are, and it's definitely worth actually who you're going to consult with and at what time. Unless those things are in the amendments to this bill, it's going to be very hard to pass this one into law.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I was delighted that this bill was put forward for consideration by the House because I

think all of us in this Legislature recognize that the people of Ontario have an opportunity to have access to safe, fresh, tasty and healthy food, which is grown right here in our own province, in various parts of that province.

I don't think most people recognize the economic importance of agriculture as well. When we talk to people, particularly in the cities or in districts of the province, and you ask them what has the greatest impact economically, they'll mention various industries—often manufacturing—which are very important, but they will underestimate the impact economically that agriculture has in our province. It has a massive impact, but it's spread across the province. So that is why, in some cases, it's not recognized for its true importance.

It's important, as well, to preserve the land that we have there. There are many people who can't wait to pave every last square centimetre of the province, to develop everything that they see in sight. We have a limited amount of agricultural land available right across Canada—right across Canada—and we should be preserving that.

It's important, as well, to label things absolutely correctly and accurately so that people, when they're going to get local food, know that it's genuinely local food: Ontario-grown and Canadian-grown. I know there's a gentleman by the name of Doug Whitty. He and his wife and family operate a farm in the St. Catharines area where you can actually go to the roadside and make your purchases which you know are going to be local and you know are going to be of the highest quality.

I think it's important that we support the bill. It has a major impact for this province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I do want to recognize and respect the member from Barrie—that he was quite passionate about it, in terms of the inability to classify local brewers as local food. I would tend to agree with him on that.

But I think the substance of the bill was summed up very well by the member from Timmins-Cochrane, where he said there's actually nothing in the bill—basically is what he said. I tend to agree with him. It's more to do about nothing in terms of, if you look at agriculture today and what they've done; it's quite tragic, really.

They said that the greenbelt was to protect agricultural land. What it's done is create more red tape. They want to build a farm implement building, for instance, to continue their business or change their business. The greenbelt legislation is very rigorous in terms of the prohibitions that it affects.

But I always like to think of local food by looking at my riding of Durham and not just to the damage that it's done to the quarter horse industry, which I talked to Dean Link and Bob Broadstock about this morning. They are two farm families where quarter horses are an important part of their business who are now being threatened out

of business and their agriculture. What they do is they use hay and oats and wheat and buy tractors and use veterinarians and keep rural Ontario alive and vibrant, and provide entertainment for the province of Ontario.

I also look at others in my riding, and I can't help but think of a couple of Deputy Ministers of Agriculture who live just up the road from where I do. I think of Knox farm. Ken Knox, great guy—his family is still continuing the farm traditions, and just up the road from where I live.

I have a couple of others: The Archibald family is very well respected in agriculture. Bruce Archibald, I think, is a deputy federally. The Archibald fruit wine orchard in my riding is a destination on farm tours as well as tourism in Ontario generally. So there's a lot to be proud of.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Again, it's with pleasure that I rise to talk about the food act, because, essentially, as the Minister of the Environment indicated earlier, it's a good thing. It actually starts a discussion that we should have been having for a very, very long time.

0940

To the member from Barrie, I really appreciate hearing about what's going on in your area. It gives me a better appreciation of the farming community and the agricultural sector in your area. It's really nice to see that you're as passionate as I feel about what's going on in Algoma-Manitoulin. However, this bill essentially does not do anything for them other than identify a week. But it does start a discussion, and that's really important.

The member from Durham actually made a very interesting point. He was highlighting a point that my colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane actually raised: that there's really nothing in this bill. We agree that there's nothing in this bill. It's something that really starts a discussion; we're hoping we're going to see something once it gets into committee. However, in the same sentence, he indicated that this adds red tape. If it adds red tape, then you're saying there's something in this bill. I would expect him to maybe change that in further comments that he's going to have because, really, there is nothing in this bill, so I can't see the red tape—unless you're cutting the cord in order to introduce this bill somewhere.

The concern I have, and my colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane actually said it, is that it will be three years before we get goals and objectives that are going to come out of this. That's one of the points. A bigger concern I have is: Who is going to be providing those goals and objectives? Who's going to be questioned? How are they going to reach out to those communities? Because if you're reaching out to friends, how are you going to be challenged to really put meat into this bill? Where is it going to be coming from? I know in Algoma-Manitoulin we haven't been reached yet, so I'm looking forward to hearing these discussions for the farmers in the agricultural sector that I have in Algoma-Manitoulin.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Barrie, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** I think the member from Algoma-Manitoulin had it right. The time for conversation is really over. We hear a lot from this other side about conversation and discussion. Although that's important, we've had 10 years to have discussion and conversation. Now is the time for action. We need to actually take action, do more than just put nice window dressing up for these bills. We need to actually get some action to get Ontario back on its feet and going again, and that starts in our agricultural industry in Ontario. That's where it all begins. That's where it all began in the history of Ontario. We need to do everything we can to make sure that this industry survives and thrives so the rest of us can survive and thrive.

I think my colleague from Oxford put it best when he said that while it's important to celebrate local food, the government seems to have forgotten where all that food comes from. We need to keep Local Food Week and Agriculture Week separate in order to fully recognize and celebrate the contributions of all our farmers.

Our caucus has listened to farmers and stakeholders and come up with bold, practical ideas to promote Ontario food through connecting Ontario farmers and food manufacturers and producers with Ontario businesses and addressing the concerns that farmers have on a daily basis. We realize the importance of this industry and see its potential, and we know that all of Ontario will benefit when we buy local food. It contributes to our economy. It's fresher, healthier food for our families. Food is produced to our standards; we know it's produced to our standards. We have more control over it. There are shorter distances to travel, making a smaller carbon footprint, and that's good for the environment. We know how important the environment is to you guys and how much attention you want to pay to that. Our children can understand where food comes from; it will increase food literacy. It will help combat child obesity.

All around, it's a good thing to promote local food. This bill doesn't do enough to do it, but it does start the conversation. That's probably the best thing it does.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The member for Haldimand-Norfolk.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this legislation. As an MPP for the rich rural riding of Haldimand-Norfolk, and with a bit of a background in agriculture, I would say that this legislation is a bit of a start. It could do a lot more to support farming and local food.

Now, when I describe my riding as rich, I'm referring to the diversity of farm commodities and natural resources down our way. I'm blessed to hail from an area that's known as Ontario's garden. It has always been known as Ontario's golden garden, one of the most—actually, it is Canada's most diverse agricultural area. We're about 100 miles from Toronto. Anybody here that's on a 100-mile diet: Keep that in mind.

We're more than willing to ship the food into the city. In fact, during the season, the trucks roll in at 2, 3, 4



o'clock in the morning to the Ontario Food Terminal. I commend our member from Oxford. We are going forward with a proposal for at least one other regional food terminal.

Down in Norfolk—and again, don't wait for us to truck it to Toronto; come on down. Why buy retail? Come on down at the wholesale level at farmers' markets. You can go right to the farm gate, the roadside stands, and we also had some excellent homegrown restaurants.

Why are we Canada's most diverse agricultural area? It's partly due to the soil types, our microclimate; we're down on Lake Erie; longer growing seasons. As well, we have that knowledge base going back many, many years: the mechanical skills, the business skills in agriculture. We know how to manage farm labour, for example.

We know how to manage sand in Norfolk and we know how to manage clay. My grandfather would always say, "Down our way," on the Barrett side, "our family is blessed with sandy Norfolk county farms but we're blessed with Haldimand clay." It can be a challenge to deal with that particular soil type. My mum's farm is on Norfolk sand. The family had been farming there since 1796. It's still in the family; it's now in the hands of my cousin. There's just one example of one family, on my mother's side, that has been farming for something like 217 years now. Our riding has been producing food for well over 200 years. It is part of our culture, and we know how to do it.

Our area is known for some extraordinary foods. Some products here I know very little about, actually. Edamame: Anybody here know what edamame is? Goji berries: health food. Horse radish—of course, you'll see Norfolk horse radish all over North America at the retail level. Lake Erie yellow perch; pickerel. Norfolk county alone is Ontario's leading grower of apples, asparagus and cabbage. We're also number one in growing cucumbers, green onions, shallots, peanuts and pumpkin. I have some pickled pumpkin in my refrigerator. Strawberries, of course, and sweet corn. Again, we cover the north-eastern United States with sweet corn. Sweet potatoes and zucchini: I used to grow zucchini. My grandmother and I would market zucchini through the local IGA.

Haldimand, of course, is famous for beef. Dairy: the famous Hewitt's Dairy bars. They've been in business for over 150 years now. Broilers. The flower trade; the greenhouse trade. I think of Rosa Flora. They're North America's largest producer of the gerbera daisy. Snyder's sweet corn is grown on Grand River silt.

Speaker, down in Haldimand-Norfolk, we can grow just about anything. The problem is selling it, and that's why I'm disappointed in this legislation. Some other commodities down our way: Belgian endive. Currants: My cousin grows currants. Maple syrup, and a new trade—the member from Oxford was down recently: We're developing a number of very successful wineries. Burning Kiln wine last year won the Legislative Assembly award for red wine.

I'll use another example down our way: VG Meats are the winners of Ontario Finest Meat Competition. VG is

an abattoir and a retail operation operated by the Van Groningen family, initially to sell beef raised on their farm. In fact, their herd of cattle shares the line fence with my farm. Every morning, I get to take a look at what I'm going to be eating a few months down the road. That's local, Speaker. They produce beef on a vegetable-based diet with no steroids. They have a retail operation down outside of Simcoe. They also have one up in Elfrida, a new retail operation up there. As part of their advertising, they say that if you were closer to the farm, as far as their product, you'd have to wear rubber boots.

#### 0950

So every aspect of the meat, from farm to store, is locally controlled. They join a number of very successful families with abattoirs down our way: the Dekonings, the Miedemas. Townsend Butchers just put \$1.4 million into their facility. I mentioned the restaurants. I think of the church basements. The quality of the food that you can get in rural Ontario—it's something that we could do well to better export to cities like not only Toronto but Hamilton, London, Windsor.

There's good hunting and fishing down our way. I figure if you're going to catch it or shoot it, you should eat it. I mentioned earlier that I do have some squirrel in my freezer if anyone is interested. My mom has an excellent recipe; it's called Bridge Street stew. You can put in beef; you can put in squirrel. I see a big smile on the face of the member from Oshawa over there. Lots of squirrel outside this building, Jerry. I don't know—.22 or 20-gauge; what do you figure? One or the other. We could do some harvesting.

You know, with respect to our area, our involvement in growing food, there's a very interesting project with respect to, in part, promoting food but promoting health care food with our area health care facilities. It's called Norfolk County's Local Foods to Health Care Facilities initiative. These are the kinds of products that should be encouraged within all government entities, really. Again, we've got to ensure that everybody is eating the best they can locally, locally available to them, and make sure they know what to do with it as well.

Randy Pettapiece, my colleague here: In his riding in Stratford, they have a local community food centre that's teaching people how to grow food, harvest, cook and preserve local foods. It's called a community food centre. They describe it as a welcoming space where people come together to grow, to cook. It provides emergency access to high-quality food in a dignified setting and doesn't compromise people's self-worth. This is something I think we have to think about in any of our deliberations, with respect to social assistance in this province; so go beyond the traditional food bank or charitable giving approaches. Again, it benefits everyone and benefits local food.

I'm very disappointed that this legislation does not talk about agricultural education. I used to teach agriculture at the high school level. Once upon a time, our high schools taught kids how to cook, the home ec classes; now I understand there's a Cosmo program that

teaches young people how to apply makeup and things like that. That may well be important, I don't know, but I think we could be educating young people a bit more about farming and a bit more about food.

There's no question agriculture is a major driver in our economy. We know the comparisons with the auto industry, and I also suggest we think beyond food. Ginseng is a very important crop down our way—locally grown; probably the best you'll find anywhere in the world—and, of course, our area remains famous for locally grown tobacco.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'm pleased to rise and contribute my comments to the Local Food Act that we're discussing today. You know, one of the things that we've talked about is how farmers help the economy. For every job in the agricultural sector, that supports four other additional jobs in our economy, so that's one really great reason to support local food.

Also, local food is fresher. When you purchase food that's grown here in Ontario or within your city or around the outskirts, you know it's going to have a different taste. It's going to taste crisper; it's going to be fresher.

The other reason is because it's good for the environment. If we're growing local food, it cuts down on pollution. So that's another reason we want to do that.

In London, there's a very interesting initiative being taken. It's a business called Eat Green Organics. What they do is they provide organic food weekly, and they deliver it to people's homes. People can order a box of food and mix up the variety, and they'll deliver it to you. It's grown locally, and then they're even going to take it to your home. So there's really no reason why you wouldn't want to support local food when they're going to bring it right to your door.

Another business that has been operating in London is called On The Move Organics. They do the same thing, but they also go a step further and try to help the environment. In that concept of how local food does help the environment, they'll deliver it on a bicycle if you're within 18 square kilometres of their delivery area. So that is an awesome initiative. You're growing locally, so you're helping the economy. You're also supporting your local businesses—so you're supporting your farmers; you're supporting your local businesses that are selling that—and you're also supporting the environment. I'm very proud of those two initiatives in London that help local food and our farmers.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I'd like to thank the member from Haldimand-Norfolk for his comments. I can tell you that I'm not really that interested in eating squirrel, but if that tickles their fancy, that's completely fine.

I'd like to talk positively, Mr. Speaker, about some of the great things that are happening in my riding. We've heard a lot of negativity concerning the Local Food Act

which contradicts what the good people that are producing local food and marketing their local food are doing in many communities right across the province.

Particularly in my riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell we have something that's called the Foire Gourmande. Foire Gourmande is an initiative in Lefontaine, Ontario. It's where local exhibitors get together and exhibit the great foods that they make—not only foods but wines and beers. We partner up with the Quebec side as well: Montebello. From the Montebello marina to Lefontaine, there's a ferry that goes back and forth and brings residents of Quebec over into my riding. In return, the residents go over to see the good things that are happening in local food on the Quebec side.

It's a great event. I attended for the last year or two. We showcase Ontario wines like Domaine Perrault. We have Beau's Brewery there, and Cassel Brewery. These are part of the local food, where we support our local businesses. Bearbrook Farm is there; Fromagerie St-Albert—I know everybody here loves St-Albert cheese. Those are just to name a couple that are actually there.

We also have every fall, Mr. Speaker, the Vankleek Hill Festival of Flavours. There's a gentleman there, Phil Arber, who organizes this great event, right down the main street of Vankleek Hill. It's a wonderful event, and I'd encourage everybody to come to Glengarry-Prescott-Russell to enjoy great Ontario food.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak. I did have the opportunity in the past to speak on this legislation. I tried, as did the member from Haldimand-Norfolk, to bring forward some of the discussion as pertains to other than the standard food sources—when he spoke about the squirrel. It has been mentioned a couple of times now. It's kind of like something from Duck Dynasty, which is fine and is just normal course. I think the member tried to emphasize the fact that there are other opportunities out there anyway. I think it was pickled pumpkin, or pickled—

**Interjection:** Pickled pumpkin.

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:**—pickled pumpkin that he had as well. These are the sorts of things that are going to set Ontario front and centre in a lot of other jurisdictions. I know, quite frankly, right now it's about time to start picking wild leeks. I'll be looking—as I have one son who's very active in picking that—for markets to put those up for sale, whether it's through the Mennonites up on Glenora Road, or it could be Algoma Orchards, which has a tendency to retail some of those local products.

I think the emphasis by the member was to try and focus on the fact that there are other things that are out there. He mentioned the perch and other things that come from his community. It's great to hear. Those are the sorts of things that Ontario needs to be able to stand up and say, "We're proud that we have these opportunities to promote these different aspects." He also mentioned maple syrup. In my debate in the past, I talked extensive-



ly about the maple syrup market. Now two thirds of all maple syrup consumed in Ontario actually comes from Quebec. It's a huge market, and there's potential all around the world to look at these sorts of things.

1000

I'm proud to stand up and support the member on all the various aspects that he has mentioned that we need to look at. We need to promote locally and do more to set Ontario front and centre throughout the rest of the world on these small niches, whether it's pickled pumpkins or, as mentioned, some of the squirrels and other things that he spoke about.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** As I've said numerous times now about this bill, I think it's important that we talk about food. I think that the scope should be expanded.

It's clear to me this morning listening to the government side that sometimes maybe we're living in two different realities of Ontario. The member from the government side was talking about the importance of local wines and local beers, which is all very nice and fine, but if you come down to Davenport, where I live, members of my community last night were talking about bedbugs. They're talking about the infestations that are in our community and the fact that there's no money to get rid of these bedbugs, and if they use that money, they've got no money for food. Speaker, that's not just happening in Davenport; that's happening across this city.

They're talking about the real cuts that this government has made to community start-up benefits that would help people actually get rid of bugs and have money for food. They're talking about cuts to special diet. That's what I'm hearing in Davenport, and that's what people are hearing across the city, Speaker. It's not just in Davenport, but in Lawrence Heights and in Don Valley North.

There are people here lining up for food banks. People do not get their cheques until tomorrow, the 26th of the month, and they made a cheque last for 26 days—a \$600 cheque, Speaker. This government is putting this bill at the top of the heap, even though there's no substance to this bill, very little substance to this bill. Meanwhile, 10 years later, people are getting poorer in this province and don't have access to any food.

Speaker, if you go to a food bank—and I would ask the government members to go to a food bank—there are literally problems. People are stampeding to get food for their families. These are the stories that I'm hearing from my friends who work at food banks, who volunteer at food banks. They are worried for their own safety because people are so desperate for any kind of food in this city.

So we hear the government talking about the joys of local wine. People just want something to eat for their families.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Sorry, I'm being corrected by the centre desk here. The member for Haldimand–Norfolk, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I thank the members for their comments, and they'll have been duly noted in Hansard.

I know the issue of squirrel was raised again. Depending on what you're eating, it is important to consider the source, consider what nutrients that particular product received or what that particular animal was eating before you eat it. I know the squirrel that I have in my freezer—they dine on hickory nut, sometimes walnut. We have an awful lot of walnut on our farm, the highest-quality protein.

I mentioned that I used to teach agriculture. I also studied agriculture. One of our teachers explained to us that groundhog is one of the best, highest-quality protein you could eat. A groundhog is very selective in their diet. They eat nothing but the finest clover when they're out in a farm.

The member for Oshawa talked about how it's time to harvest wild leeks. My aunt has a cookbook with a number of recipes on how to cook wild leek. I recall one recipe; the first sentence in the recipe was, "First, you take a leek." Then it described what else you do to cook leeks.

I did make mention of tobacco in my presentation, something we grow not only in Norfolk but in Elgin, Oxford, Brant, Middlesex and beyond. Decreasing crop sizes have hit the industry very hard. The present government did nothing to help out. That's why I find it very hard to support this bill.

Challenges remain for farmers: red tape, regulation, electricity costs, the closure of abattoirs, the destruction of Ontario's horse racing industry, the demise of our cattle industry and, again, lack of suitable government programs.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my pleasure to also rise and speak to this bill. I've offered some hits in the House and, similar to this morning, I think what I want to start off with saying is that I'm just really concerned that this bill is a lot of nothing. It says we "may" arrive at some goals and targets and we "may" establish goals and targets to "aspire" to in respect of local food.

They've had 10 years to get this done. What we need is action, and we need to have concrete goals. We need to be doing things that actually help the economy, help the agricultural sector and put people back to work.

The Minister of the Environment rose earlier this morning and was talking about the economic impact. I just find this a little bit interesting, the fact that under his leadership the OTS increased fees, just recently, that most significantly impact the farming community. Tire fees are going from \$100 to \$385 and, for the larger tractor tires, up to \$1,600 per tire. How is that helping farmers? How is that helping the agricultural community?

Again, in this particular case, the environment and the energy ministers have presided over a government that enacted the Green Energy Act, which is allowing great farmland to be taken out of production for wind turbines and solar panels. How is that helping our agricultural sector and our most important commodity, our safe and healthy food?

Within that green energy, they've allowed the energy prices in North America—we are going to have the highest rates of energy in North America here very shortly. How is that helping our economy? How is that helping those 500,000 people who woke up this morning without a job? What we were hoping with a Local Food Act is that they would actually have had some action in that act, not “we want to, we may, we might.” We need some “we will.”

The other thing I would be remiss not to mention—there has been a lot of talk in this House in the last week for certain, and probably the last couple of months, on this gas plant scandal and the billion dollars that will be wasted in that that could have gone to the agricultural sector.

I want to be very specific to my riding. We had a devastating event last year with the frost that impacted the apple harvest and the apple industry across the board. I'm being told by the apple growers' association that a \$25-million investment over seven years would virtually rejuvenate that whole industry and that we would be able to supply every single apple to the Ontario market that's needed. I find it very interesting that we can spend \$85 million or \$275 million on something like the gas plant in the blink of an eye with no thought process, but we can't actually extend it to this very vital industry, which then has a ripple effect to the economy in all of our local areas—\$25 million to do that.

It would make our growers more productive. It would supply the entire market in the province. It would sustain the direct and the many indirect jobs, and it's appalling to me that they can stand in this House and defend a \$275-million overture on one gas plant. We don't even know how big the next one will be and yet they can't do that. But then they bring a bill like this that says we “may” establish goals and targets, and in three years we'll review it. The time for conversations and reviewing and paying consultants on their tab is over. We need to be doing more things to get this back.

My colleague from Haldimand-Norfolk talked a lot about the great things in his riding. I just want to offer a friendly challenge. I think somewhere in there he mentioned that he might have had the best apples in Ontario. I just want to make sure that Meaford, in my great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, is the centre of the universe when it comes to apples. We are the apple of Ontario, similar to how New York is of the States.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's Algoma? Well, I'm not certain I'm going to cede to Algoma here. I think I'm going to stand up for my folks in Meaford, who do a wonderful job.

We have the Keady market, which, again, attracts people from all over. A lot of people come to our beautiful part of the world, to Sauble Beach, to the Bruce Peninsula, to Meaford to enjoy their holidays, and they travel on Tuesday mornings to the market. I definitely think there's that, and there's the Owen Sound Farmers' Market. There are places like Flesherton and Markdale that have farmers' markets. In my little village that I grew up in, the great village of Hepworth, Ontario, Canada, there's Sinclair's Market Garden that's now, I believe, third generation, and again, the best produce that you can find locally. They do everything on their farm with their own hands, and when you walk in there you can just see the pride in their eyes of producing that for you. Yes, sometimes the odd produce is a little bit more expensive than those grocery market shelves, but you know what? I'm proud to pay that, because that, I know, is supporting a family in my backyard and their children and their grandchildren.

1010

I think we need to do all we can to support our local markets. I'm not certain that this bill—like many of the bills, unfortunately, that I've had to speak to that have been introduced by the Liberals, it's a lot of smoke and mirrors. There's a lot of vapour in a lot of the things that they do. There's not a great deal of substance.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bill Walker:** The gas plant; yes, a lot of vapour there—probably about a billion dollars' worth of vapour that will produce no energy for our province. I don't want to get off topic with those boondoggles that they have, because I could be here all day and I wouldn't really be addressing this Local Food Act. We have the eHealth boondoggle, we have the gas plant boondoggle, we have the Ornge boondoggle, and all of this amounts to 600,000 people—or 500,000 people, whichever number; both are horrifying numbers of people—out of work today.

They doubled the debt in the 10 years of their reign of horror—reign of terror—and this bill here is not doing a thing to address that. It's not helping those local people produce more food. It's not allowing them to be more competitive with their local food. All it's doing is a bunch of paper, red tape, and adding to the burden of these poor farmers who need to get out about it.

I want to reflect back—and my staff have done a great job of putting some information together. Back in about 2004, there was a report tabled by the McGuinty government entitled Small, Rural, and Remote Communities: The Anatomy of Risk. This report basically says that everything should be moved into the cities; it should be into those urban spots. They're Liberal anti-farmer policies, such as the hiked tire recycling fees that I've spoken about earlier, the gas tax inequality that's been there for many years—well, who spends more money on gas than rural people, and particularly farmers, who are always on a vehicle of some sort trying to create their crops?—the industrialization of rural land with wind turbines, the decimation of the horse racing industry, the recouping of the BSE payments, skyrocketing hydro and, again, these gas plant scandals.



There's a lack of conviction in this bill. There are no real targets. I've talked, again, about these tire fees. I just can't get past this one, because people in my riding continue to call me. The pending 1,000% hike to these recycling fees on used tires—that's going to hurt farmers, contracting and small business industries all across our great areas.

The inequality with the gas tax: My colleague Mr. Yakabuski from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has brought this to the House seven times; fortunately, the last one, I think we finally won the vote, but will the Liberals ever bring it and truly create equality, which will help those farmers that they so glowingly say they're trying to represent despite having a part-time minister at the helm of that very, very, very important ministry?

I've talked about the hydro hike. We went from a leader, and now we're going to be a leader again. Unfortunately, we're going to be a leader in rates for energy across North America. How is that helping local farmers stay in business or expand their business?

They decimated the small abattoirs. In my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, we are the beef capital of the province, probably across Canada. We have Big Bruce in Chesley, Ontario, but you know what? They've decimated the small, little abattoirs, so that has had a huge ramification on our local beef producers to be able to get their animals to market, and to get that to the great market that's out there. We know people want it, because it is the best beef in the world, really. We need to be doing things that are going to actually entitle—one of the members over there continues to say about the positive. You know what? The positive would be if they'd bring legislation that we could support and get behind, so we're actually doing that thing to move our economy forward and helping people get back to work and employment.

I just spoke yesterday with the manager of the Hanover Raceway and was talking again about the mess they've made of the whole horse racing industry. They are going to decimate 60,000 jobs. They've created a situation where that industry is leaving Ontario at a rapid pace, and we may never get it back, despite them trying to put a Band-Aid on it. They have a half-built hall, the Carriage Hall. They put out \$5 million, and it sits there idle because the funding source that they thought they had in good faith was taken away without any consultation.

I just want to summarize by saying that this was a "maybe" bill: "We may set targets. We may set goals. We'll review it in three years." Well, that's not helping the farmers of today. This isn't ensuring that that next generation wants to step up, buy the farm and continue that proud tradition of so many farming families out there. What we need are concrete targets. We need them to actually step forward. I want to just again put a plug in and challenge the minister in this new budget coming forward that they'll put that \$25 million in to revitalize the apple industry so that that farming community has a future.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm very pleased to have Dawn and Ed Novak here in the Speaker's gallery. They have just received an Attorney General's Victim Services Award of Distinction. They're here at Queen's Park for the day. Welcome.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** As has already been noted, I had the honour of presenting the 2013 Attorney General Victim Services Awards of Distinction. I was joined by the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, the Minister of Research and Innovation and the Minister of Rural Affairs. The Premier dropped in as well, which was quite a surprise for everyone.

In the Speaker's gallery today, we have the awards recipients, and I would like to introduce them at this point in time and thank them for all the hard work that they do on a day-to-day basis for us. We have Barbara Bird and Kaye Torrie from Peterborough, Elizabeth Anne Danowski from Lindsay, Geraldine and Edmund Healey and their daughters Teresa Healey and Sue Massey from Newmarket, Annie Merrell from Kawartha-Haliburton, Nadia Pasquini and Margaret Dovigo from Chaminade College School and students James Mangaliman and Daniel Masangkay of Toronto, as well as Lorris Herenda from Richmond Hill, Nancy Chamberlain from Thunder Bay, Monika Huminuk from Kenora, Peggy Loyie from Fort Frances, Dawn and Ed Novak from Muskoka, as has already been noted, Emilie Crakondji from London, Janice Campbell also from London, Michelle Schryer from Chatham-Kent, Christine Peringer from Perth, and finally Lisa Fox from my home riding of Kingston and the Islands. Congratulations to all of them for their achievements.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I want to take this opportunity as well to extend a special welcome to the Remember Me Homicide Support Group from Newmarket. This was an organization created in recognition and honour of Brenda Healey. A special welcome to her family here today.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I'd like to introduce Dan Wickson. He's the president of CEP Local 425G from Stevensville, and he's here today to talk about severance issues.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It's my pleasure to recognize a former member of this Legislature, the former member from Brant, Ron Johnson, current chair of the College of Trades.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stealing a little of my thunder, but I'll still recognize him.

Further introductions?

**Mr. Kim Craitor:** I too want to recognize some of my brothers and sisters who have come up from Stevens-

ville because of a terrible plant closure by an American company. They're up here to share their story with us and to ask for our support. So I want to recognize them, and I want to recognize Dan, who's the president of the union, as well. Thanks for coming up.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** It's my pleasure to introduce today Diana Carney, who is the mother of Sophia Carney, who is a page here. Sophia is the daughter of Diana and Mark Carney.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** I have the pleasure today to welcome to Queen's Park teachers and two classes from a wonderful school in York West, Cardinal McGuigan. They are slow coming in, but they are sitting on the west side there. I'd like to welcome them to Queen's Park, and I hope they will enjoy their day here.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, on a point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear pins in remembrance of the National Day of Mourning.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Labour has asked for unanimous consent to wear the pin for the recognition of the National Day of Mourning. Do we agree? Agreed. Thank you.

Further introductions?

Even though my introduction was stepped on, I will still introduce the member from Brantford for the 36th Parliament: Mr. Ron Johnson, former MPP. Welcome, Ron.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### POWER PLANTS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, next week we will be tabling a motion to test whether your government has the confidence of this Legislature. Premier, do you believe, after your decision to spend 275 million tax dollars to save a few Liberal seats, and after the Auditor General has informed Ontarians of the blatant abuse of those tax dollars, that your government deserves the confidence of Ontarians?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I believe that our government deserves the confidence of the province if we can demonstrate, Mr. Speaker, that we are on a track that is fiscally responsible, that is going to lead to a fairer Ontario. I think that the budget that is being developed right now, in consultation with people from around the province—the Minister of Finance has talked to people all over Ontario about their concerns. I have spoken with both leaders of the opposition parties. I believe that the budget that we will bring forward will be even-handed and will be a testament to our aspirations for the people of Ontario. That, I believe, is what the people of Ontario can have confidence in.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'd say a confident government would be happy to have a confidence vote if that were the case. But the Auditor General's report on the cancellation of the Mississauga power plant has made a few facts abundantly clear. Not only do you and your Liberal government use tax dollars for purely partisan purposes, but you spend those tax dollars without any regard for the hard-working people of Ontario who actually earned them. The Auditor General has pointed out countless examples: \$4.2 million spent for land and a warehouse that Ontarians never got back; \$41 million spent for undocumented labour costs. The list goes on and on.

Premier, do you think it's fair to Ontarians who work hard to keep food on the table and keep the lights on to blatantly waste over \$275 million, with absolutely no remorse?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have said repeatedly, Mr. Speaker, that I regret that we are in this situation vis-à-vis the relocation of the gas plants. I regret that we didn't have a better process up front so that a different decision could have been made earlier on, so that there could have been a different community process and so that we wouldn't have been in this situation, which by the way all parties agreed needed to happen, that we would relocate—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to get started right off the bat. The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, come to order, and if the Minister of the Environment could save his comments while his Premier is answering, it would be very helpful.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I've been very clear that I regret that we didn't have a different process and that we have had to take on this situation. Had we had a better process up front, we wouldn't be here.

But the reality is that I've done exactly what I said I was going to do. I said I was committed to being open and transparent, that we would make sure all the documentation—all the questions that were asked were going to be answered. That's what's happening now, Mr. Speaker. That's what the people of Ontario can have confidence in.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, an expression of regret doesn't even begin to answer the concerns of the people of the province of Ontario. Premier, you're at the heart of this scandal. You co-chaired the campaign that decided to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to save a few Liberal seats. You're now the Premier of a government that defends this decision and doesn't really see anything wrong with it.

After the Auditor General's report has made this reckless spending apparent, don't you think it's time that the people of Ontario should actually have a chance to tell you what they think about this?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, two points on that: The people of Ontario and the members in this House will be confronting a budget in the next very short period of time, and they will have an opportunity to express confidence or not in the government. That is the confidence motion that I think we need to focus on.

1040

In terms of the decision to relocate the gas plants, it is very important that the people of Ontario understand that the member who just stood in her place and asked that question was part of a party that campaigned on doing exactly the same thing. She needs to be very clear with the people of Ontario that had they followed through on their campaign promise, they would have had to take the same action—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** They would have had to reverse the decision, and it was exactly—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, we heard in the public accounts committee from four former directors of the former Ornge board. They swore in their testimony a particular theme, and it was a theme that has run throughout the committee hearings into the Ornge scandal. It's a theme that was confirmed by the Auditor General, and that theme is that the Ministry of Health failed in its oversight of Ornge.

My question to the Premier is this: Given the testimony consistently that the ministry failed in its oversight, I'd like to know from this Premier what the consequences are in her new Ontario government for ministers and deputies and bureaucrats who don't do their job, and how many more Ornges are there throughout this government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Health will want to comment on the specifics, but I just want to say this: We have said that there needed to be better oversight at Ornge. We have said that there needed to be a better regime of oversight, which is why we introduced legislation to tighten up that oversight, to make sure that the monitoring was in place and to make sure that the rules were much more explicit. That's what the legislation is about. My expectation—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are a couple of members who are maybe playing hide-and-seek with their seating arrangements, but I will still ask them to go sit in their seats so I can tell them to stop heckling. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville has a comment for me to make?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm glad that the member will not stop.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to try to deal with this in a calm way. I don't need his comments after I finish admonishing him.

*Premier.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My hope is that the member opposite and his party will support the legislation that would actually put that increased regime of oversight in place, because I'm assuming that underpinning his question is a concern about the general approach to oversight that government would take. My hope is then that he will support the legislation that would change the oversight that we've admitted needed to be tighter.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I've pointed out before that there's a reason that the A was dropped from the spelling of Ornge, and that's because it stands for accountability.

Well, here is another Ornge the Premier should know about: The Premier should know that the executive officer of the Ontario Public Drug Programs is required by law to issue an annual report detailing Ontario's public drug program.

Well, Speaker, given the track record of her Minister of Health, does it surprise the Premier that there has been no report filed on that program for the last five years? This is a \$3.5-billion program; Ornge was \$150 million.

What excuse for this glaring lack of accountability will the Premier accept from her Minister of Health this time?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Our health care system is an excellent health care system. I think all members of this Legislature would agree that Ontario is a great place when it comes to our health care system. I've said before, it is not perfect, but it is excellent. We rely on our health care system for oversight of boards of directors in our hospitals, in various organizations. We rely on those board members to do their job.

What we heard in testimony yesterday from former board members is that they failed in their responsibility to provide appropriate oversight. That's why it's very important that we move ahead with Bill 11—terribly disappointed the members opposite voted against Bill 11. We need to get Bill 11 passed so we can finish the job when it comes to correcting the ship at Ornge.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, my question was about the minister's oversight. She doesn't even know that that report has been missing for five years. That's why our health care system is in the mess that it's in. I'm asking the minister one more time: Where is the report? Does she even know that the report hasn't been filed for five years?

At a time when we're dealing with chemotherapy problems in this province, the minister stood here and said she didn't know anything about it. She blames the federal government. She's going to look into it.

Now she wants Bill 11. It has nothing to do with the question I asked her.

I say this to the Premier: Given the lack of confidence that the people across this province are showing toward this government, will she respect this place? Will she allow the members of this House to vote on a want-of-confidence motion that we will be tabling early next week?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, this has been an interesting series of questions. I'm not quite sure where the member opposite is going with it. But I'll tell you, we will be having a vote of confidence in this Legislature in coming days.

We have a budget that will be before this House. It's a budget that, as we know, serves to continue to strengthen our health care system by investing more in the services that our seniors and our patients need, more in the community sector, more home care. Those are issues that everyday people in this province are very happy to be seeing this government moving on.

#### TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. New Democrats have been clear since the throne speech that if we're going to support a budget, it has to create jobs, it has to strengthen health care and it has to make life more affordable. We talked to people about how to attain these goals, and we put realistic, achievable proposals on the table that can deliver results for people who need them.

But that's going to require the Premier to make some pretty serious choices, Speaker. For example, the government is still committed to opening a new tax loophole worth \$1 billion a year—over \$1 billion a year—so that corporations can write off the HST when they entertain their clients. Is the Premier ready to admit that this isn't something that we can afford in this province right now?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I appreciate the leader of the third party. I appreciate the issues that she has put on the table. I think that the Minister of Finance has said that he is engaging with the federal government on some of the issues that she has raised.

But the overarching reality is that we have a lot of common ground in terms of the direction that we want to go. So the issues that she has put on the table in terms of home care, in terms of auto insurance, in terms of youth unemployment—those are all areas that we're very concerned about, that we are going to move on. My hope is that we'll be able to find common cause on those issues, because they are issues, I believe, that should be shared by all of the parties in this House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** These are tough times for the government; there's no doubt. But they're also very

tough times for the families of Ontario. They want to know why they're going to be asked to pay more and expect less while their government creates \$1 billion worth of new tax loopholes for some of the biggest corporations in the province. Is the Premier still going to go ahead with letting corporations write off the HST at the same time that she'll be asking people to pay more?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What we're going to go ahead with, as we've talked about in the last few days, is 46,000 people getting more home care. We really believe that that is the kind of issue, that's the kind of concern, that people share every single day. That's the kind of concern that affects people's lives every day.

I understand that there are concerns about the particular financial regime. I know that the Minister of Finance has been in touch with the federal government. There are things that we have control of, and there are others that we don't, Mr. Speaker, but we want to have a fair tax regime, obviously. That is work that the Minister of Finance is involved in.

1050

But at the same time, we have to continue to do what we can as a province to make people's lives better, to make sure they get the home care that they need, to make sure that they get the physiotherapy that they need, particularly our seniors, which is why we are changing the way that physiotherapy will be delivered. Those are concerns that affect people every single day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, people are making it pretty clear that they want to see some change. For years, they've heard Liberals and Conservatives promise that tax cuts for Ontario's largest corporations were going to create jobs in this province, that six-figure pay hikes for CEOs in hospitals would make patients healthier, that bigger profits at insurance companies would trickle down to the drivers of this province. Speaker, they have not seen the results. Instead, they have been falling further and further and further behind.

They want to know why the Premier would hand Ontario's largest corporations a tax break while asking them to pay more and to expect less. Can the Premier explain this, Speaker?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the question. The leader of the third party knows all too well that this is not a loophole. This isn't new news. These are restricted input tax credits, tax credits that were part of our tax plan for jobs and growth in 2009. We're working very closely with the federal government. We introduced this as a meaningful reform to Ontario's tax system. These restrictions were to be phased out by 2015 and will be fully phased out by 2018—all part of our value-added tax system.

What's important here is that we continue to find ways to make our companies more productive, ensure that they do get the value that they provide. But at the same time, we have to take precautions to ensure that everyone pays



their fair share and that the people of Ontario are protected. So we will continue to move forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We've asked the federal government to work with us to ensure that any situations that are provided—the loopholes that we're looking at are the ones that are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:**—avoiding to pay taxes, and they're the ones that we have to go after. In this case, we will continue to collaborate with the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Stop the clock for a minute.

Just a reminder to all members: When I stand, you sit. Your microphone gets turned off anyway, just to let you know.

New question.

### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** What's not new news is that Liberals and Tories favour corporate tax cuts instead of giving families a break. That's what's not new news.

My next question is to the Premier. We know over here that Ontario can do better, and we've put forward some simple, achievable solutions that will take some small steps to get us there. But it's going to require the Premier to make some choices. It's time to say that we can't afford another round of corporate tax giveaways or seven-figure salaries for CEOs in the public sector.

Will the Premier make it clear in the budget that she's not going to ask people to pay more while those who need help the least get yet another break?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm going to come at this a different way. I really believe that one of the underlying assumptions of the question from the leader of the third party is that there is a clear distinction between business and ordinary people and that somehow those are opposing ideas; they're not. Ordinary people have jobs, Mr. Speaker. The reason we have to introduce a balanced budget and that we have to put initiatives in place to make sure that business and people and the general population do better is that their fates are interconnected. People need jobs, and business needs to be supported in a way that will allow them to create jobs.

So we are going to do everything we can to deal with the loopholes that both the Minister of Finance has talked about and the leader of the third party has talked about. But we're also going to put in place job-creating conditions and supports for people who need them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, it has got nothing to do with underlying assumptions. We think it's pretty simple: Ontario families shouldn't be waiting 262 days to get a loved one the home care that they need in this province. Ontario's drivers shouldn't be paying the highest auto insurance rates in the entire country. Over 180,000 young people shouldn't be stuck in their parents' basements wondering if their career is ever going to start.

When it comes to addressing these challenges, the government has tons of excuses and all kinds of caveats, but when it comes to finding money for CEO salary hikes and new tax loopholes worth billions of dollars, it's full steam ahead by the Liberals.

Will the Premier get her priorities straight in the upcoming budget? Simple question.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Here is the fact: What we've said is that the leader of the third party has asked that we put in place a home care regime that would cost \$30 million. We're putting in six times the amount. We're providing home care for thousands more people, and on top of that, we're doing it in a way that's transforming the system.

We're very clear that in order to make the health care system sustainable we need more services delivered in the community, we need more services delivered at home and we need house calls for people who need doctors. So \$185 million is what we've said we are prepared to put into home care. They asked for \$30 million; we're saying that we're going to put in \$185 million. I think our priorities are very clear.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's cold comfort for the people of Ontario who have watched the health care budget double in this province since this government came to power, and they're still not getting the health care that they deserve.

New Democrats have been very clear: We're going to work hard and deliver results for the people who make this province work. That means working hard for real results for them, not vague promises and future conversations. That means making people a priority, not sticking them with the same old status quo.

Can the Premier tell us whether she'll be moving ahead with more plans for CEO salary hikes and tax breaks for Ontario's wealthiest corporations or whether she'll actually put people first in this budget?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Our budget is going to be about being fiscally responsible because if we are not fiscally responsible, we will not be able to invest in the services that people need. Our budget is going to be about investing in the future, making sure that people who are waiting for home care get that home care more quickly and that people who are waiting for home care get more support than they are getting right now.

Our budget is going to be about tackling the issue of youth unemployment because I know and everyone in this House knows that it's unacceptable that there are young people who are not able to find jobs, even though they are qualified. Our budget's going to tackle that issue.

Our budget is going to tackle the issue of the fact that auto insurance in Ontario is higher than anywhere else in the country. We're going to tackle that, but we're going to tackle those issues in a way that is practical. We're going to tackle those issues in a way that's doable and

that's going to make people's lives better. That's what we've been doing for nine years, and we're going to continue and leap ahead on that.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Premier, you talk about being open and transparent in the Legislature, but that's not what's happening over in the justice committee. I want you to listen to this baffle-gab we got from a Liberal staffer when I asked a simple question about a \$712-million offer.

Here's his answer: "What I said to you was that I didn't recall having anything to do with it ... but if your timeline shows differently, then I would have been involved with the discussions on it." Basically what he's saying is: "It wasn't me, but if you have documents that show it was me, then it was me." That's to go along with the 65 times in one hour that that same witness said, "I don't know" or similar words—65 times in one hour.

Premier, why should we ever believe anything from you and your staff again?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm very interested in this whole concept of transparency in front of the committee because I had a chance to follow the proceedings this morning, and those that did on television or who were there will know that this morning the PCs and NDP were trying desperately to ensure that the Leader of the Opposition did not appear in front of the committee on Tuesday.

Perhaps in the supplementary the honourable member will be able to stand up and confirm whether the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hudak, will be there because we want to ask him about this brochure that I talked about yesterday, the one that reads: "The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party. On October 6, vote Ontario PC." We want to know about his analysis and costing, and hear from him, so I hope the honourable member will confirm this in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?  
1100

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I can tell you that the people of Ontario are absolutely sick and tired of the games that this party is playing. At the justice committee today, Chris Breen from TransCanada, the proponent of the re-located Oakville power plant, confirmed a number of things for us. First of all, he confirmed today that the former energy minister had absolutely no idea of the cancellation of the Oakville power plant. He told us that it was exclusively the Premier's office that told him about the cancellation, and when he went to a meeting with the minister, the minister was shocked that it had been cancelled.

We also heard from him, for the first time in two months—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** With no comment. Carry on, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** We heard for the first time from a witness in two months now that the \$712-million offer was made to TransCanada and they did indeed reject it.

So, Premier, I say to you, you are clinging to this \$40-million story when TransCanada rejected \$712 million. How can we ever believe anything you ever say again?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, I think it's worth noting the different story of what's happening through the honourable member's questions and what's happening in front of committee.

The honourable member talks about transparency, and yet when we suggested a special meeting of the committee to hear from the Ontario Power Authority, that member voted against it. When the Premier showed up for a late show, that member chose not to participate. And I couldn't help but notice, when I asked in the supplementary if he would indicate whether the Leader of the Opposition would be there Tuesday, he ignored that request. We have some questions for the Leader of the Opposition. We have questions for an individual who made a YouTube video to talk about his opposition to the plant and the fact that if he had become Premier, he would have done the exact same thing.

We're looking forward to those discussions on Tuesday, and I hope the honourable member will persuade the Leader of the Opposition to be there to answer all those questions.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Premier. It's clearer than ever that the government is more interested in protecting Liberal seats than in serious energy planning. In fact, the Liberals ensured that a power plant would go ahead in York region at the same time as they cancelled plants in Oakville and Mississauga. Why did the government cancel power plants where Liberal seats were at risk but pass regulations to ensure that similar projects with similar opposition went ahead in opposition-held ridings?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You know, we have made the point many times in this House that there have been many gas plants sited in Ontario, I think 17, and of those, 15 were placed and the process went ahead; for two, the decision was made, agreed to by all of the members in this House, that those locations were not right, and so there were relocations put in place.

I say to the member opposite, we will continue to place energy infrastructure around the province, as is responsible. There needs to be a better process, and these two processes demonstrate there needed to be a better up-front procedure, but we will continue to build energy infrastructure in the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Today, Chris Breen, a representative of TransCanada, said that they found it strange



that the government passed regulations to ensure unpopular plants in northern York went ahead in opposition-held ridings but cancelled two unpopular private power plants in Liberal ridings. It seems strange indeed. Why is this Liberal government more interested in protecting seats than in listening to Ontarians?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** What I find strange is that the honourable member failed to acknowledge that his party was out campaigning against the Mississauga plant.

You know, let's talk about the justice committee. Let's talk—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will come to order.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's talk about Greg Rohn, the Coalition of Homeowners for Intelligent Power, a group in Mississauga that was opposed to the plant. They came in front of the justice committee, and this is what they had to say: Yes, "The NDP were against the plant.... The NDP came in and attended our rally." I can go to someone perhaps a bit more famous—Mayor Hazel McCallion in Mississauga. You know what she told the committee? "The impression that was certainly given beyond a doubt ... I think all parties would have cancelled it; there's no question about it."

How can the honourable member from a party that opposed this plant stand in his seat and ask those types of questions? The simple fact of the matter is, the New Democratic Party was firmly opposed to the Mississauga power plant.

## ONTARIO BUDGET

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. Minister, Ontario has strong economic fundamentals and has weathered the great global recession. We are stronger than ever, but there is more to be done to ensure our economy continues to create good, high-paying jobs.

My constituents of Oak Ridges–Markham are eagerly awaiting the upcoming budget. They are eager to see the new government's plan to balance the budget by 2017–18. They also value investments in infrastructure and initiatives to transform and renew Ontario's essential public services. Could you please update the House on when you will deliver the budget and speak to some of the themes it will address?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you to the industrious member from Oak Ridges–Markham for the question and her tireless efforts to support her constituents.

As I formally announced yesterday, Ontario's budget will be introduced on Thursday, May 2. It will be a budget that speaks to the needs of all Ontarians, wherever they may live. It will establish a clear and concise path to balance by 2017–18, and will detail measures to achieve that success and that plan.

It also moves forward on 60% of Don Drummond's recommendations to build on the success of modernizing

Ontario's public service, ensuring that a cost-effective and sustainable manner is proceeded.

Ontario is already ahead of its deficit reduction targets for the fourth year in a row, and I was pleased to announce this past Monday that our updated projection for the last fiscal year has decreased by \$5 billion.

Ontario's budget will also commit to building Ontario's strong economic fundamentals, invest in young people, focus on public transit, and support strong municipal infrastructure.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Again through you to the Minister of Finance: I am pleased to hear that you plan to introduce a budget that speaks to the needs of all Ontarians. It is important that, as part of this new plan, we hear from all Ontarians.

Ontario is a diverse province that celebrates our unique backgrounds. As we know, this government has made it a priority to reach all Ontarians and act on the concerns and ideas that are voiced. Could you please tell this House how you consulted with Ontarians from across the province in preparation for the budget?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I'm pleased to say that Ontario's budget will be among the most widely consulted documents tabled in this House to date. Over the course of these last several months, we have undertaken a wide range of consultations with individuals across the province. In fact, the budget will speak to most of what the members opposite, in both parties, are also looking for, but more importantly, to what the people of Ontario have asked.

We have held eight in-person town halls in nine cities across the region. During these town halls, we have heard from over 300 groups and individuals that expressed their ideas and concerns. And through our digital engagement strategy, we have reached over 600,000 Ontarians in 25 ridings.

Members of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs have also undertaken an array of consultations. I thank them, all members from both sides, as well as the members from Oakville, Scarborough–Agincourt, Mississauga East–Cooksville and Vaughan, as well as all the 150 stakeholders who participated in the five cities.

The legislative committee's hard work has been delivered to me in a comprehensive report that documents all opinions after being heard. It will be reflected in Ontario's budget.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** My question is for the Premier. It would seem your government has a case of selective memory when it comes to the cancelled gas plants. Let me give you some examples. Nobody, including two cabinet ministers, can recall a documented \$710-million deal with TransCanada. Somehow, your government forgot to include \$85 million in your original \$190-million costing of the Mississauga gas plant. You apparently couldn't

remember anything despite two former energy ministers admitting under oath that the Mississauga decision was made by the campaign team that you co-chaired. Apparently, a selective memory has never been more convenient.

Premier, the people of Ontario should have confidence in the Office of the Premier. Will you uphold the honour of the office and give us the total cost of the Oakville plant today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, it's one of those where you don't know where to start. First of all, the member from Nipissing has said that he wouldn't believe any figures that we came out with anyway, so we asked the Auditor General to look into it. That wasn't good enough, the fact that we have an officer of the Legislature, so we came forward to the committee yesterday and asked to have a special session with the Ontario Power Authority, where they could ask numerous technical questions and get into as much detail as possible.

1110

Once again, I wanted to know if there was something wrong with my television. I saw the opposition vote against it. Instead, they spent today, the NDP and the Conservatives, trying to work behind the scenes to make sure that the Leader of the Opposition would not come forward.

If you want to talk about collective amnesia, it's the fact that the party over there has forgotten that they firmly opposed this gas plant in the last election. They would have done exactly the same thing had they formed government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Premier, I ask about the honour of the office, you send out the second string and say, "Let them eat cake."

Back to you, Premier: Let's be honest. You do know the full cost of the gas plants. The Auditor General has testified that you have all the information you need. You know the costs now and you knew them then.

What's worse than your willful ignorance is your refusal to take ownership and correct the record following the Auditor General's report proving this government lowballed the cost of Mississauga.

Premier, this behaviour is insulting to me; it's insulting to the opposition; it's insulting to the people of Ontario. The truth is not a luxury; the Ontario people deserve to have it. Will you stop the deception and give us the totals of the gas plant—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Attorney General, come to order.

The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, we have asked the Auditor General, who is an officer of the Legislature, to report to the committee. The member speaks about what's happened with the gas plants and what the cost and figures are.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Both of you need to stop.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, as I have noted many times in this Legislature, his leader and his party opposed the gas plants. They sent out tweets; they sent out press releases; they made YouTube videos; they had robocalls. They passed out pamphlets to the people within the riding.

The fact of the matter is, we would like to know about the cost analysis of that party. We would like to know about the types of detailed work and study that they're asking if we had undertaken; well, the same questions hopefully will be asked by them.

Mr. Speaker, I hasten to observe that not a single member has confirmed whether the Leader of the Opposition will be there next Tuesday, despite the machinations of the PC and the NDP.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to mention this again. When members are answering, I'm hearing heckling from the same side, which only provokes, and when I hear some questions being put, I hear some heckling which does not help the matter either. Then I follow up with—then it gets between banter between members that has nothing to do with the question or the answer.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to ask the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke not to make comments while I'm speaking. I am getting frustrated with the amount of—shall I call it "talkback"?—when I'm trying to do the job that I'm supposed to do. It's not helpful.

I'm going to ask us to kind of tone it up instead of going to the bottom.

New question.

## PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Premier. On January 16, more than 100 people lost their jobs when a US-owned Vertis Communications company abruptly closed in Fort Erie. Many of those workers are here in the gallery today.

Since then, they've been fighting to get \$2.4 million worth of pension plans, benefits and severance packages that they are owed. But because Vertis Communications filed for bankruptcy protection in the US, the federal Wage Earner Protection Program does not apply to them.

What does the Liberal government intend to do about this deplorable situation for these Ontario workers?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.



**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the member for the question. I share the member's concerns and the frustration of the workers from the Stevensville plant. Any time someone loses a job, any time a plant closes, it is difficult for the worker, it is extremely difficult for their family and it's a huge concern for the whole community.

The federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcies and insolvencies, and we have made our government's position very clear to them. The federal government's inaction on this issue is unacceptable. It should make no difference whether the bankruptcy happens in Canada or south of the border. These workers deserve fairness and access to the same rights as any other worker in Ontario.

I'd like to thank the member opposite for bringing this issue forward, and the member from Niagara Falls, who has been working very closely with me to ensure that we find some help and some resolution to the plight of the workers in Stevensville.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Back to the Premier: It's clear that the federal program does not cover these workers in this particular situation. We're talking about 100 workers, some of them the wife and the husband working at this company. They gave their lives to this company—some more than 35 years. Now they're being short-changed \$2.4 million in severance, in benefits and in pension plan contributions. The provincial government is responsible for ensuring that workers get the severance that is rightfully theirs.

Premier, you have to fix this. You have a responsibility to act. What are you going to do to fix this problem for these workers?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I have to make it very clear: I've been working very closely with the local union leadership, and I welcome them here today. I, along with three previous Ministers of Labour, have written to the federal government asking them to broaden the scope of the Wage Earner Protection Program. My focus is on making sure that this does not happen to another worker in Ontario.

Just three weeks into my role as minister, I was speaking to the MPP from Niagara Falls on this matter. On March 4, I spoke with CEP local and national union representatives. On March 6, I wrote to the federal Minister of Labour, Lisa Raitt, urging the federal government to close this loophole.

We will continue to work to ensure that the federal government takes concrete action to protect workers like the ones from Stevensville's plant so that all workers from Ontario are protected and that their rightful severance is protected under the law.

## PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** I'm really pleased that I'm able to follow my colleague from the third party on the same subject. Dan Wickson, who is here and who is the president—I'm glad that you've taken time, and I know some of the members have.

Listen, this is absolutely disgusting: 100 workers, brothers and sisters of mine, and an American company that decides to file bankruptcy in United States and then sells their assets to another American company that comes in and closes the plant. I've stood on the picket line with the workers. I've been to the media, and the real crux of this is that we need to have some changes with the provincial and federal government, particularly in the area of the Bankruptcy Act, so that the act says that if you file the American side, it's—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question.

**Mr. Kim Craiton:**—on the Canadian side.

Through you to the Minister: Can you just comment on some of the things that we've been trying to do, not only for these workers but for workers in the future, so this doesn't happen again?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I really want to commend the member from Niagara Falls. From the moment that I became Minister of Labour, he's been working along with me to find solutions to this very serious problem. He has been able to bring the local representatives and been able to bring national representatives so that we can find practical solutions. Talk is cheap in these kinds of things because there are 100 families that are involved in this scenario, and we need to find concrete solutions. That's why I've taken action on this from the very first day, urging the federal government to step up to the plate, do the right thing, broaden the scope of the Wage Earner Protection Program and—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Thank you.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, this is obviously difficult for the workers. It's difficult for the families and of course it's a challenge for the community. I will continue to work along with the member from Niagara Falls and the member from Welland so that we can all collectively work and ensure the federal government does the right thing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** My supplementary question is to the Minister of Labour as well. You know—this isn't in my notes. It's absolutely disgusting. These people take the time to come here—I thank you for doing that—and then we sit here and argue back and forth. I'm not special. I have spent time at the demonstrations you've had. Dan, you know that.

It's absolutely disgusting when an American company can lay charges against the workers and drag them into court because they say that they have trespassed by demonstrating in front of the plant to let them know. I attended the court hearings with them to show my support. We were able to accomplish some things and put some things on hold.

1120

This government is, and I am, trying to find a solution. We can heckle back and forth—

**Mr. Rick Bartolucci:** That doesn't help.

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** That doesn't help. To the workers—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** It's not about pensions. Listen up. It's not about pensions. Jeez.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Niagara Falls—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. The member—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. Thank you. The member from Niagara Falls will withdraw. He has said something unparliamentary.

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** I certainly will. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And I would ask all the armchair people to kind of let me do my job.

The member has put his question. The Minister of Labour will answer.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** You can see the passion in the member from Niagara Falls. That is the passion he has brought on this file. It is evident here today, and I thank him for his representation for this community.

Speaker, I want to tell you what I've asked, specifically, of the federal Minister of Labour, Lisa Raitt, in my letter to her on March 6. I specifically have asked her to expand the scope of the Wage Earner Protection Program beyond bankruptcies and receiverships to include all situations when a company closes and fails to pay money owed to its workers. In addition, I have asked the minister to review the cap on this program and give consideration to extending secured-creditor status to workers who are owed termination and severance pay.

I will continue to press upon the federal minister that these changes be brought forward. I ask other parties to call upon their colleagues as well, in all three parties, so these changes can be made.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** My question is to the minister who thinks he's responsible for the Pan Am Games—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's an example of the things I've been trying to ask us to avoid, and that is the race to the bottom instead of the race to the top. The member will identify the appropriate minister in the appropriate manner.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for the Pan Am Games.

What does an English and philosophy degree, contributing multiple thousand-dollar donations to the Liberal Party, getting a job from family friend Jean Chrétien and volunteering in Liberal election campaigns get you? For Paul Genest, it means a plum patronage appointment as deputy minister responsible for the Pan Am secretariat. He must be an excellent friend, for sure. This Liberal

love has landed him salary increases totalling 140% over the past three years. He's making \$361,000 on the public time for a duplicated Pan Am structure.

Minister, are you running this file, or is the file running you?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the honourable member from Barrie for asking the question.

Our government does not set compensation schedules for the Pan Am Games; TO2015 does. The compensation schedule and structure is well within the standard of other games, like other previous Pan Am Games, Commonwealth Games and the Vancouver Olympic games. It is well within the 15% threshold of the cost of staging the games.

Allow me to give you another example here. The Vancouver Winter Olympic Games, while smaller than our Pan Am Games, hired 4,000 people come game time. We plan to hire 400 people come game time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Speaker, an answer to the question would be great.

There's never been a clearer case of blatant nepotism than this secretariat's deputy minister appointment. I've looked at the other secretariat management appointments to see if these heavy 140% raises are typical for this duplicate bureaucracy or if there's just something especially Liberal about this deputy minister. I found that these managers only received 1% to 18% increases over the same period of time, but it gets better: None of them had a history of personally pandering to the Liberal Party of Ontario. I'm sure Mr. Genest has not performed 120% better than his peers. Even they will tell you that in brown envelopes to our office, but so will the fact that there's no justification for this Pan Am duplicate bureaucracy.

Minister, do you think it's appropriate that a well-established Liberal partisan lead this duplicate bureaucracy?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you very much for the question. I know the member opposite attacks the people who are running the Pan Am Games. Now he's attacking public servants who look after the Pan Am Games.

Toronto 2015 is a non-profit corporation responsible for the planning, organizing and staging of the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games. The Pan/Parapan American Games secretariat is responsible for providing provincial oversight of game preparation and coordination of provincial services. They are helping make sure our dollars are spent efficiently and for maximum impact.

The federal government created their own secretariat within Sport Canada to oversee the investment in these games. The Vancouver and London Olympics also had government secretariats to oversee public investment in those games. It is the normal—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.



## GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** My question is to the Premier. Folks in London see a real disconnect between the priorities of this government and their own priorities. Londoners hear that this government spent \$250 million to cancel a gas plant to help the Liberal Party win an election. They witness a staggering local unemployment rate of 9.6%. More layoffs are expected to front-line workers in London hospitals, leading to less service for people who need it.

My question to the Premier: Why are Londoners being shortchanged while this Liberal government wastes hundreds of millions of dollars to save a couple of seats?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I'm very pleased to be able to talk about what's happening in our health care system right now in London, Ontario, because it's an example of the significant improvements that are happening in our health care system. In fact, Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity of sending greetings to a conference of the South West CCAC—

**Mr. Paul Miller:** How's that hospital in Grimsby coming?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. No, no, sorry. Keep going.

The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, this is the last time. The next one is a warning, which follows something else—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And I also want to remind the Minister of the Environment: He's not helping when he provokes.

Minister of Health.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, thanks to the investments that we have made in community care and home care and thanks to the very excellent work that is being done in the community sector, the ALC rate, the alternate-level-of-care rate at London Health Sciences Centre has dropped an astonishing 71%.

We are transforming our health care system. We are shifting resources to the community. I think the member opposite should pay a visit to the CCAC and see what our investments are actually doing for people in her community.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Again to the Premier: Over a quarter of a billion dollars was wasted to cancel this gas plant so the Liberals could keep a few seats, and what the people in London hear about, in terms of support from this government is that the southwestern economic development fund is still not functioning despite the desperate need for jobs in the region. The London Catholic school board will cut 10% of teachers despite a 5% decline in enrolment.

My question is very simple: Why is this government ignoring Londoners while working for its own political gain?

1130

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, Speaker, I simply have to disagree with the member opposite. Maybe she could look at what we've done for wait times when it comes to cataract surgery. St. Joseph's Health Centre—cataract surgery is 384 days less than it was. That's over a year that has been taken off the wait time for cataract surgeries.

We've seen a reduction in wait times for cancer surgery, and we all know, when people are waiting for cancer surgery, that we want to make that wait time as short as possible. We've taken 32 days off that wait time. We've reduced CT scan wait times by 56 days and MRI wait times by 135 days.

Speaker, these changes are happening because of the strategic investments that are being made in our health care system, investments that benefit the people the member opposite represents.

## PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I have a real question for the minister responsible—the wonderful minister responsible—for the 2015 Pan Am Games. People in my riding of Brampton West are excited about projects that are under way across the province in preparation for the upcoming games in 2015.

I heard recently that the president of the Pan American Sports Organization visited Ontario as part of a four-day tour that included a stop in Toronto's West Don Lands, where the future athletes' village will be located. The athletes' village, and other Pan Am venues, are certainly a wonderful opportunity to showcase Ontario.

Speaker, through you to the minister: What else can the government tell us about the facility and the Pan American Sports Organization's recent visit to Ontario?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the member from Brampton West for asking the question. I think he's a member who understands the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. I'm proud to quote the PASO president, who said last week that Ontario's games in 2015 will be "the best ever."

During the games, the athletes' village will be home to about 10,000 athletes and team officials. Once the games are concluded, the village will become a new, friendly community that will include 1,000 units for lower-income families, a new YMCA, and George Brown College's first student residence. This one venue alone is creating over 5,000 jobs for Ontario's economy.

Ontario is proud to be hosting the games and delivering an exceptional experience for athletes and visitors alike.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Back to the minister: The games will attract as many as 250,000 visitors from all over the world who will stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants and shop in our stores. The upcoming games have proven to be a catalyst for economic, social, infrastructure and athletic development in Ontario and will leave a legacy

of new and improved sport and recreation facilities for years to come.

Speaker, through you to the minister: What else should we know about the upcoming 2015 Pan Am Games, and what other exciting news can I share with my constituents?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you for the question. It is because Ontario won the games bid that the federal government is investing \$500 million in sports infrastructure to support our province. For that, I want to say thank you.

Speaking of infrastructure, the CEO of TO2015 recently pointed out that it will be worth the investment, saying that the games “will stop the nation and show what we are capable of.”

I want to thank everyone who has been working so hard to bring the games to Ontario. I'm also happy to inform the House that we now have six designs for the games' official mascot, submitted from kids across Canada. I encourage all the members, and all Ontarians, to pick a favourite mascot by voting online next month until May 5.

#### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. Norm Miller:** My question is to the Premier. I rise today to address a very important matter that a number of northern communities are facing. Retroactive assessment by the Municipal Property Assessment Corp. has threatened to bankrupt a number of our northern communities. Fort Frances, Dryden, Espanola and the township of James have all been hit hard with reassessments that have come out of the blue. Despite significant pressure from these communities, your government has remained silent.

Premier, do you agree that these northern communities deserve an answer today on what you are doing to keep them from going bankrupt?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I want to thank the member for the question. Certainly while I was at the ROMA/OGRA conference in February and with meetings with AMO, they have raised this issue with me and about the potential impacts on municipalities across the province. Certainly I understand, as a former municipal councillor, that the impact of any changes to property assessments on municipalities is alarming.

Although I can't comment on any specific case that is before the Assessment Review Board, I want to assure our municipal partners that we hear the concerns of municipalities about those assessment changes. My ministry is working with the Ministry of Finance to evaluate the issues surrounding the assessments of large industrial properties, be they mills or other facilities. We recognize the importance of the economic viability of our small municipalities, especially in the north, and our ministry is working closely with those municipalities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Again to the Premier. Premier, this issue is of critical importance to northern communities.

Dryden, Espanola, Fort Frances and the township of James cannot afford the financial hit they're facing.

Northern mayors are very frustrated with the process, especially the retroactive nature of it. They feel like they've been blindsided. I spoke with Reeve Terry Fiset from the township of James, and his frustration was clear. After meeting with your Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and writing letters to you, action has still not been taken to address the MPAC recalculation that threatens to bankrupt them. The municipality has already been forced to spend over a quarter of a million dollars in legal fees that cannot be recovered just to fight this.

Premier, what do you expect these municipalities to do in response to MPAC's recalculations?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** We recognize that there continues to be a need for an ongoing discussion with our partners, particularly those who are experiencing challenging fiscal circumstances. That is why the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance and staff from my Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will be meeting with representatives from James, Espanola, Dryden, Fort Frances and other municipalities on Monday, April 29 to discuss this pressing issue. We're committed to that ongoing conversation and to working with the parties to ensure that all communities across this province are able to succeed and prosper.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question is to the Premier. Small municipalities are facing dire situations as a result of the increasing costs of providing clean water and the disappearance of the Ontario Small Waterworks Assistance Program.

Ontario has a network of safeguards and oversight measures to ensure that a tragedy like Walkerton will never happen again. Out of the Walkerton inquiry, Justice O'Connor made recommendations for improving Ontario's drinking water, but now the cost of meeting these requirements has been shifted to the backs of taxpayers in smaller communities. Will the Liberal government commit to finding solutions to help communities with a small user base provide clean and affordable drinking water?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The Minister of the Environment.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Drinking water, as you know—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's okay, Minister, I'm giving you a chance to—I've stopped the clock. Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The quality of water in the province is always important, whether it's in northern Ontario or southern Ontario, and I want to assure the member that the Ministry of the Environment and other ministries which have similar responsibilities are doing everything possible to ensure that the quality of drinking water is excellent in this province. You will know, for



instance, that yesterday the Premier of this province saved, in fact, the Experimental Lakes in northwestern Ontario. Marvelous work was being done there by scientists, some of them residing in northern Ontario, some of them from the province of Manitoba, a world-class operation that the Premier announced yesterday that instead of having that operation close, the Ontario government was intervening to ensure that that operation would continue and that we would continue to have the experiments needed to keep the quality of our water at the very highest.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question again is to the Premier. My focus is on small communities. Small communities across the province face unique challenges with the financial sustainability and affordability of their drinking water systems, but the last wave of OSWAP applications ended in February 2012. This funding is depended upon by small municipalities to help alleviate the costs of public drinking water systems. The community members of Assiginack on Manitoulin Island have been notified of a 41% increase in water rates for the coming year, and the township of the North Shore has been facing similar problems for the past 10 years.

1140

Will the government commit to continuing OSWAP funding so that all Ontarians, even those in small, rural communities, have equal, affordable access to clean drinking water?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The Minister of Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member for raising that. We have a number of programs through Infrastructure Ontario, including a loan program, as well as the MIII program, which is \$90 million to help municipalities with very small tax bases on basic infrastructure.

I am quite happy to work with the Minister of the Environment and the member opposite to try to find some funding—this is funding for urgent, critical issues. We can appreciate the concern of communities that need access to drinking water when they don't have the infrastructure that's sufficient. I will make a commitment to meet with the member right away and work with him to solve his problem. I thank him for raising it.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Premier on a point of order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to correct my record. I said that 15 of 17 gas plants were sited since 2003. It's actually 17 of 19 that have been sited.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services on a point of order.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** With your indulgence, I would like to introduce a constituent of mine, Diana Carney, who is here today. She's the mother of Sophia Carney, who is a co-captain today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence as well, I'd like to introduce a mentor, a great friend and a very respected individual: Bud Wildman, the prior MPP for my region.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Another member steals my thunder, but thank you.

We do welcome you.

I will acknowledge again the member from Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'd like to welcome to the Legislature Ligia Nobrega. She's the president of the cultural association for April 25, for commemorating the Carnation Revolution in Portugal. She's joined by Carlos Morgadinho and our special guest from Portugal, Colonel Carlos Alberto Évora Maia de Loureiro—where you celebrate your victory against fascism. Thank you so much. Obrigado.

#### ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Oxford.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of order. Pursuant to standing order 99 with respect to written questions on the order paper, I beg leave to inform the Speaker that the Minister of Agriculture and Food is in breach of the order and has not answered the following order paper question: question number 3, which was filed on February 27, 2013. The question asked the minister to provide a breakdown of advertising done by the ministry over the last four years. We have not received the cost of any of the advertising—not even the total amount for four years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to direct the Minister of Agriculture—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member, you've made your point, and I was standing.

I would ask members to hang on for just a moment because there is a special announcement I have to make after this. One moment, please.

I've checked with the Clerks' table, and my understanding is that questions 1 through 6 have been answered.

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** To all honourable members, I need to announce that this is the last day for our pages. I would like us to show our deep appreciation for this wonderful group of people.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands adjourned—

*Interjection.*

## VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Sorry, yes. I did want to say one more thing. Somebody did step on it, but the Speaker does usually announce when former members are here: Mr. Bud Wildman from Algoma, for the 31st to the 36th Parliaments. We thank the member. He's in the west gallery.

## CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from London—Fanshawe on a point of order.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to correct my record. In my question, I said that the cost was \$250 million, and the correct cost is \$275 million.

## CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex on a point of order.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my member's statement, I spoke about 10-year-old Kaidyn Blair, who was encouraging people to sign up for organ donations. I stated that to date he has registered 243 people; in fact, it is 403 people, which is an enormous thing, so I wanted to correct that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands adjourned until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1145 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** You're only as good as the people that work with you, so I'd like to welcome my constituency office manager, Karen Contestabile, here today.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Joining us in the west members' gallery are two volunteers from my constituency office, Atifat Ashraf and Samantha Ho, with my executive assistant Gary Milakovic.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## KATE'S KAUSE

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I rise in the House today to congratulate the amazing work of our local Elmira Kiwanis Club, and Kelly Meissner, the lead advocate of a local charity called Kate's Kause. Kelly is the mother of two-year-old Kate, who was born with Angelman syndrome. "Angels," as we call them, have cheerful personalities but struggle with many day-to-day activities we take for granted, like personal care, sleeping, verbal communication and walking.

Following the diagnosis of Kate's condition and wanting her daughter to be able to enjoy the simple pleasures in life, Kelly started raising money to build a fully accessible playground at Gibson Park in Elmira. With both Kelly and the community's efforts, they managed to collect and raise \$450,000 to build a state-of-the-art playground called Kate's Place for Everyone.

I have, in fact, visited Gibson Park with my family, and it is quite the sight to see. In fact, my favourite feature is the roller slide, made specifically for kids with hearing problems. The design prevents static buildups, so children's hearing aids are not affected. Kate and the many other visitors can now play and grow together, allowing kids just to be kids, something that children with disabilities don't always have the opportunity to do. Doctors even say that Kate is walking and talking far sooner than expected for kids with Angelman syndrome.

With spring finally here, I look forward to visiting the playground this weekend, and I encourage everyone from across Ontario to take a look at the Kate's Kause park and come join us as we celebrate the installation of a new sensory wall designed for those with vision problems and a green gym for seniors across our community as well.

## HOCKEY FOR HEALTH

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** This past weekend, I paid a visit to the fifth annual Hockey for Health three-on-three tournament in Kenora. Individuals from across north-western Ontario travelled to Kenora to take part in this very important fundraising event which donated 75% of its proceeds to the Lake of the Woods District Hospital, 15% to the twinning of the Kenora Recreation Centre, and 10% to the Canadian Cancer Society.

The goal for this year's tournament was to raise \$55,000 to be split among the three causes, but I am pleased to report that they exceeded their goal by raising \$66,000 in total. Leading the charge were the novice division Red Lake Ice Diggers, who raised a tournament best of \$11,927.13.

I would like to congratulate all the teams that took part in this very important event, and give very special recognition to those who took part in the Don Your Cherry Jacket Contest, who went the extra mile to raise funds. Grapes himself would have been jealous of the stylish jackets that were brought out for this portion of the fundraiser; and I encourage him, if he's watching today, to see for himself the photos of their fancy threads and to even recognize their efforts on the next Coach's Corner.

On behalf of the community, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Dean Caron and his hard-working team, who made this tournament a resounding success by raising community spirit and much-needed funds for a number of outstanding causes.

## VOLUNTEERS

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** This week is National Volunteer Week, which celebrates the many individuals who give



up their time and whose sense of civic responsibility reminds all of us of the importance of giving back to the community.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognize four young people who volunteer in my constituency office in the great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham: Atifat Ashraf, Samantha Ho, Yousef Khan and David Nissan. Atifat and Samantha have joined us today.

Atifat is studying for her master's in public policy at the University of Toronto, with the goal of entering public service upon graduation.

Samantha is a graduate of York University's professional writing program and combines her love of social media with culinary arts in her blog, *Curiosity to the Oven*.

Yousef is a graduate of the University of Toronto and a proud first-generation Canadian. He is thankful for all the opportunities this country provides and hopes to one day become a leader in the public sector.

David is an avid baseball player who holds a master's degree in political communication from the University of Western Ontario.

These young volunteers all live in my riding and brought their own unique perspective to the constituency office. With unfailing reliability, each shared their time and their energy with the people of Oak Ridges–Markham, and I would like to offer them a sincere thank you.

#### HALEIGH WIGGINS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise in this House today to recognize and congratulate Haleigh Wiggins on being awarded the Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers. She was presented this honour right here at Queen's Park on Monday.

I'm proud to say that Haleigh is from South River, in my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka. She is currently pursuing her education at Nipissing University, where she is enrolled in the teaching program.

Her commitment and volunteer contribution to Best Buddies Canada has been truly remarkable. Best Buddies Canada is a national charitable organization that pairs people who have intellectual or developmental disabilities with buddies to create friendships and provide the opportunity to share new experiences.

Haleigh has been volunteering her time with Best Buddies Canada for over six years, stretching back to when she was still attending Almaguin Highlands Secondary School, where she served as chapter president.

Haleigh has made a tremendous contribution to the special-needs community and continues to bring enthusiasm to this important cause, even while completing her studies in North Bay. Haleigh's commitment to Best Buddies Canada sets a tremendous example for all of us, and her passion for volunteering cannot be overstated.

Congratulations, Haleigh, on receiving the Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers.

#### CLINTON STREET JUNIOR PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** A public school in my riding celebrates an important milestone this year: 125 years ago, the Clinton Street public school opened its doors, just north of College Street, welcoming 480 students from the surrounding community.

Over the years, Clinton Street school has taught thousands of children, including alumni such as 60 Minutes anchor Morley Safer; human rights activist Alan Borovoy; Sam Sniderman, better known as Sam the Record Man; Eddie Goodman, whose influence is well-known in this House; and my good friend Howard Moscoe, former city councillor and chair of the Toronto Transit Commission.

At a time of funding cuts to music education, I note with pride that Clinton has also nurtured world-class musical talent. Composer Louis Applebaum attended Clinton; so did Toronto Symphony Orchestra conductor Victor Feldbrill; Zal Yanovsky attended Clinton in the 1950s before co-founding The Lovin' Spoonful with John Sebastian; and Richard Parry went to Clinton as a boy, before moving to Montreal and joining Arcade Fire, whose last record, *The Suburbs*, won the Grammy for Album of the Year in 2011.

The achievements of Clinton Street school alumni demonstrate the impact of high-quality public education in Ontario. They also demonstrate how music education can spark a flame in a child that can take them to Massey Hall, the Lincoln Center and Wembley Stadium.

As a former teacher and school trustee, I believe in public education with all my heart, and Ontario's teachers and educators deserve our everlasting gratitude.

I congratulate Clinton for 125 years of excellence, and I look forward to joining them on May 9 to celebrate this remarkable milestone.

#### McMASTER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OPHTHALMOLOGY CENTRE

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I had the opportunity to visit the McMaster Children's Hospital recently as they celebrated the completion of a \$1.8-million campaign to develop and equip their new pediatric ophthalmology centre.

Thanks to a \$1-million gift from the Hogarth family and Pioneer Energy, the campaign ended on a real success. The new Hogarth Family and Pioneer Energy Ophthalmology Centre is built to serve the unique needs of children and their families. It features state-of-the-art ophthalmology equipment, a clinical layout suited to the needs of children, and child-friendly furnishings to enhance the care and comfort of their young patients.

The new centre is extremely unique. It's the only neonatal ophthalmology screening program in the entire region. It's the only hospital with a pediatric retinal surgeon in the entire region. It offers the only pediatric ophthalmology training program for new doctors in south-central Ontario.

1310

I had the opportunity to tour the centre in 2011 with Jen Hartman after her daughter Chloe went through the centre, so I know she would like me to thank all of the community and all of the corporate partners who contributed generously to build the new centre and congratulate all of those involved on a very successful campaign that's going to help children in Hamilton and the entire region.

#### REG CHAPPELL

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I rise today to congratulate Newmarket resident Reg Chappell for being recognized as the Ontario male coach of the year. Reg is into his 50th year of coaching, and over those years has inspired and motivated numerous young athletes to become the best they can be. Reg founded the Aurora Swim Club, Master Ducks, the Stouffville Swim Club and the Ducks Swimming Club.

As a national-class coach, Reg has shown national swim qualifiers since 1971, with numerous swimmers qualifying for Olympic trials. Two former age group swimmers went on to make Olympic teams in 1976 and again in 1992. Among the athletes he inspired to achieve their goals was Summer Ashley Mortimer, who won four medals—two gold, one silver and one bronze—at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London, where he had the honour of coaching our Canadian swimmers as the Canadian Paralympic coach.

Among his many honours over the years was the Special Achievement Award, bestowed on Reg by the Ontario Swim Coaches Association in 1980, 1985 and 2005.

Speaker, I ask all members of the Legislature to join me in congratulating Reg Chappell for being named the Ontario male coach of the year.

#### DECA INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I want to take this time to recognize and congratulate the students of the DECA Club at Dr. Norman Bethune Collegiate in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt for their participation in the DECA International Career Development Conference. DECA is an international organization to prepare students for entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, hospitality and management.

Seven years ago, DECA was started at Dr. Norman Bethune high school and grew into a club of almost 200 students. This year, after months of preparation, 13 Bethune students finished in the top five of their events at the DECA provincial competition. These students now have the opportunity to represent their school, Ontario and Canada in Anaheim, California.

The DECA International Career Development Conference is running from April 24 to 27. About 15,000 delegates from around the world come together in com-

petitive events such as oral business case studies, written business plan proposals and leadership development academies. I look forward to hearing of their success at this year's conference.

I want, finally, to acknowledge the leadership of the principal, Sandy Kaskens, and teacher Ms. Krista Yeung for her leadership and hard work in mentoring these young people. It is with great honour that I recognize 13 exceptional young leaders in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt. They make us proud.

#### HUCK FINN YOUTH FISHING DAY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** This Saturday, April 27, I'm going fishing in Uxbridge. It's the 11th annual Huck Finn Youth Fishing Day at Elgin Park. Highlights include the popular Huck Finn parade, featuring decorated bikes and wagons as well as dozens of Huck Finn look-alikes. There are great prizes for the kids, a free lunch, free bait, as well as rods and reels for novice anglers.

I'd like to thank the principal organizer, Pat Higgins of Uxbridge Canadian Tire, Amanda Ferraro, and the mayor and council of Uxbridge township for keeping me informed on the fishing day events.

Sponsors include Canadian Tire, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Uxbridge township, the Royal Canadian Legion, the Optimist Club, Pickering Rod and Gun Club, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Uxbridge BIA and the Durham regional police.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome all members here from Queen's Park and colleagues and their families to visit Uxbridge on any day, but more particularly to have a fun day fishing in the great outdoors this Saturday morning, April 27. Everyone is welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member is definitely a dead ringer for Huck Finn. Just thought I'd let him know. I listen to the statements.

#### NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Barrie has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and responsible for the Pan/Parapan American Games, concerning the Pan Am Games. This matter will be debated next Tuesday at 6 p.m.

#### MOTIONS

##### AGGREGATE RESOURCES REVIEW

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the Standing Committee on General Government and that the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this motion without further debate or amendment.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I move that the Standing Committee on General Government be authorized to revive the review of the Aggregate Resources Act and report to the House its observations and recommendations with respect to strengthening the act. In developing such recommendations, the committee's focus shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas: the act's consultation process, how siting operations and rehabilitation are addressed in the act, best practices and new developments in the industry, fees, royalties and aggregate resource development and protection, including conservation and recycling.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy moves that the Standing Committee on General Government be authorized to revive the review—

**Hon. John Milloy:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense.

All those agreed to the motion—agreed? Agreed.

*Motion agreed to.*

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, this April 28 is a solemn day in Ontario. We will stop to observe in sombre remembrance workers who have been killed or injured on the job. It is our province's official day of mourning. This weekend, people across this province will gather at ceremonies in city squares, union halls and various other locations. Flags will be lowered to half-mast to honour loved ones, co-workers and friends we have lost.

Since the 1980s, the Ontario government has recognized the Day of Mourning. It is a day recognized in cities across Canada and in 80 countries around the world. This year's theme is "Remember. Our movement for change. Train for it. Work for it."

We must remember. We must make sure workers are properly trained, and we must redouble our efforts to protect workers and their families. This is a day to rededicate ourselves to doing whatever it takes to prevent workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses and to honour those we have lost and to acknowledge those who are injured. They are our sons and daughters, our husbands and wives and our friends and neighbours. We honour the skill, dedication and commitment they brought to their jobs every day by making sure those who follow have safer workplaces.

Speaker, I'm notified each and every time a worker is injured or killed in our province. This is the toughest part of my job. Most recently, Speaker, an accident occurred just blocks away from my house in Ottawa. No family should ever have to hear that a loved one is not coming home from work.

Thanks to the commitment of those who fight to make workplaces safer, together we are making progress. Workplace injuries have decreased significantly over the last number of years. In construction sites, businesses, hospitals and schools, health and safety advocates are making workplaces safer.

Our government has taken strong steps to reduce and eliminate workplace injuries. We have doubled the number of enforcement officers to make sure employers follow the rules. We have brought enforcement and prevention under the purview of our new chief prevention officer, helping to make sure that injuries do not happen in the first place. We launched the first-ever province-wide occupational safety strategy. It was developed with input from labour, employers, injured workers and community groups to establish clear priorities and rules that will guide our work in the years ahead.

1320

In addition to these measures, we continue to roll out our comprehensive safety blitzes, focused on identifying hazards before they might harm workers, and ensuring employers are providing proper training for all employees.

During the summer, it's particularly important for us to protect our youth, many of whom are starting new jobs or started their first job this spring. That's why, throughout the spring and summer, health and safety inspectors from the Ministry of Labour will conduct inspections in workplaces where students and young people are employed. Teaching new and young workers the value of workplace health and safety means a generation of safer employers, safer job sites and safer communities.

Remember, when it comes to health and safety, we all have a part to play. It is everyone's responsibility. I encourage all Ontarians to do their part to protect our province's greatest and most precious resource: our people and our workers. Working together, we will keep lowering the injury rates in Ontario workplaces and ensure that Ontario continues to be one of the best and safest places to work in the world.

Speaker, many members are wearing yellow and black ribbons to commemorate the Day of Mourning. I encourage all of us to wear these ribbons over the weekend. The black represents mourning; the yellow represents hope for a safer and brighter future—a future where there are no injuries, where everyone will be able to go home safe and sound and where lives are not at risk.

Let us pay our respects and honour their memories. Let us renew our commitment to ensure a future without workplace injury and illness. We owe the hard-working men and women of this province nothing less.

Speaker, I ask, following responses, that we observe a moment of silence for all those who have suffered a workplace injury or lost his or her life in our province. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister has asked for unanimous consent to observe a moment of silence after the responses. Agreed? Agreed.

Responses?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's an honour to respond on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the PC caucus.

The National Day of Mourning on Saturday, April 28, is a solid reminder of the lives cut short and the men and women who have been injured in the workplace. Sadly, statistics tell us that in 2011, there were 919 workplace deaths recorded in Canada. In the 19-year period from 1993 to 2011, a total of 17,062 people lost their lives due to work-related causes. This is an average of 898 deaths per year. That's more than two lives lost every day of the year. In 2010, more than 184,000 Ontarians suffered lost-time injuries or illness in the workplace.

Numbers cannot tell the whole story. Behind each of these numbers is a family, a mother, a father, a young person, a member of the family, the circle of friends, co-workers, a business and the community that suffers the loss.

As MPPs, we are often asked to assist constituents seeking help with medical needs and disability claims because they were injured at work or have work-related illnesses. We know workplace injuries leave individuals and families devastated. These are men and women who wanted to be the very best for their families and for their community. These are men, women and young people who took pride in their independence, their dignity and opportunities for the future provided by their jobs, their trade, their profession. They are working hard to achieve these goals. Their loss of life or their injury is tragic for all of the lives they touched and for the broader community.

The National Day of Mourning is a reminder to each of us that we must redirect ourselves to satisfy the safety and the requirements in the workplace so that workers can be assured they will come home to their families at the end of each workday. We want to ensure that workers who leave for their jobs every morning know that they have the knowledge, the training, the equipment, the skills, the experience and supervision essential to a safe workplace.

A safe workplace requires a partnership by all. That participation includes workers, their supervisors, business, unions, health and safety organizations, the medical communities and others—it's all of us. It also includes each of us because we have the responsibility to enact legislation and policy that keeps workplaces safe.

The members will be aware that the National Day of Mourning is observed in 80 countries around the world. The flag at Canadian Parliament buildings will fly at half-mast. In Toronto, the CN Tower will be illuminated in yellow, a colour symbolizing hope, on April 28. In Durham region, I will be attending the Durham Region Labour Council when it pays tribute to fallen workers on April 28 at the workers' memorial located in a parkette on the grounds of the Oshawa city hall.

These ceremonies include all branches of government—the Durham Region Labour Council leading the tribute to fallen workers. The local ceremonies are dozens of memorials and events taking place across Ontario and indeed through all of our ridings.

It is important to remember that lives lost in the workplace, and the many workers who have sustained injuries and illness, must be respected and honoured. That being said, we must also rededicate ourselves to prevention and to ensure a healthy workplace for all Ontarians.

I encourage Ontarians to remember and honour all the lives lost or injuries in the workplace on the National Day of Mourning on April 28, and it's probably a good time to reflect on the hundreds of lives lost in Bangladesh recently. Workplace safety is a responsibility of an entire community.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** This is the second occasion that I've had the honour, as our party's labour critic, to speak on behalf of our party on behalf of injured workers and workers who have been killed on the job. It's an occasion that, obviously, comes with solemn feelings and sadness. It's not one that brings happiness to me and one that I do not look forward to speaking upon.

I still, at this point, do not feel that we've done enough in this province and through this legislative body. I've been here for 18 months and not yet have I seen a bill come forward through this House that would improve the health and safety regulations through the province. I say that sincerely. It's discouraging. It is directly related to the statistics that we stand every year and deliver.

This year, dating to 2012, workplace deaths have jumped 16% in Ontario. Ontario's statistics show that about 377 workers died on the job from occupational disease in the last year, which is an increase of 53 from the previous year. A breakdown of the figures from the Ministry of Labour and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board reveals that job fatalities alone climbed by 11 in the last year, or 15%, to 84. It's unacceptable. There is no one in this chamber here today who can stand in a sincere fashion and say that we are doing enough. We are not.

The minister knows that he has my full support to work with him, hand in glove, every second of the day, to ensure that proper legislation is put forward to enforce current laws and to enact better laws.

I'm pleased that the member opposite raised the issue of the Bangladeshi workers who died last night because it is a cautionary tale and one that I would expect and hope the minister raises soon—he can still do that—that we do not condone any business that degrades its health and safety regulations, whether they be in this province or outside of this jurisdiction. There's a statement, a credo, that's often spoken through injured workers and families of injured workers, that an injury to one is an injury to all. Those Bangladeshi workers, the majority of whom were women garment workers, were forced to go back into that building, were forced to enter into a building where they saw visual cracks, fractures into the structure. They knew it was coming down. There was an order to evacuate the previous day, but yet they were forced to re-enter that unsafe workplace.

1330

Through this legislative body, we can say quite clearly that we do not condone that type of corporate work. It's terrible, Mr. Speaker.



There are injured workers as well who fall under this category who have seen the degradation of our workplace safety and insurance system to the point where the denial rate of claims in this province has increased about 50%, so there are 50% more denials than there were previously. Vocational rehab has been slashed from 19 months to five months. There's been \$631 million in benefit costs reduction; a 29% reduction in long-term benefits for the permanently disabled.

Now, this would all be well and good if we saw that injury rates and disability rates from workplace accidents were going down, but they aren't. They do not correlate. There are more people being injured and less people being compensated for it. That's a failure in the system that this government absolutely needs to address, and yet we have not seen anything come through this chamber to do it.

So I beg, I plead on behalf of the injured workers, on behalf of workers who have been killed. And I want to recognize some of my colleagues—Takis Escoto, Claudio Cardoso and my cousin Johnny Fostey—who died while at work. I recognize them simply out of the thousands who have died over the years. I'd also recognize those 26 miners from the Westray tragedy who died. We will never forget them.

But it is up to us in this body, in this chamber, to decide ourselves—I've said it before: The rate is zero. The number of fatalities on a job, the only acceptable rate, the target that we should set and can set and deliver the resources to achieve, is zero. It's the only acceptable measure. It sets the tone for our global health and safety standards, and it's one that we can be proud of and one on which I totally deliver all of my efforts to the government, should they decide they want to embark on that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. It is now time for petitions.  
*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize. I did actually write it down.

I would ask now that, through unanimous consent, we all stand and recognize a moment of silence for all of the deceased and injured workers in the province of Ontario.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think I am going to change it up, and I want to go to the member from Simcoe-Grey.

### SPRINGWATER PROVINCIAL PARK

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we oppose the termination of the operating budget for Springwater Provincial Park in Springwater township on March 31, 2013;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We ask that the park remain operating and facilities such as the animal sanctuary, cabins/shelters, playground equipment and ground maintenance remain intact and operating."

I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

## HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

"Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

"Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

"Whereas electricity generated and used in north-western Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation."

I support this and will give this to page Amina to deliver.

## FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I fully support the petition and I give it to Madelyn.

### LAND USE PLANNING

**Mr. Frank Klees:** This petition relates to the Ontario Municipal Board and my private member's bill that has been referred to general government:

"Whereas municipalities are required to produce official plans that are compliant with the Places to Grow Act and the provincial growth plan; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario prescribes population growth and intensification targets through the provincial growth plan that must be met by municipalities; and

"Whereas even if the designated growth and intensification numbers are met, they are deemed to be minimum numbers; and

"Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board may approve densities to be located in areas not identified in the official plan, resulting in significant additional costs to the municipality because of required changes to long-term infrastructure plans, and also disrupts the character of existing communities;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Preserving Existing Communities Act, 2013 ... that amends the Places to Grow Act, 2005 to provide that a decision made by a municipal council is final and may not be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board if the following conditions are satisfied:

"(1) The decision is to refuse a request to amend the municipality's official plan with respect to land that is designated for one or more of the following: stable residential area and parks and open space.

"(2) The municipal council has passed a resolution stating that the requested official plan amendment would not be in the best interests of the municipality."

As this is my private member's bill, I affix my signature and I would ask that members help to get that bill into committee very soon.

### DOG OWNERSHIP

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Whereas breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Whereas problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and to instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

I sign this on behalf of the over 1,000 dogs that have been killed because of the way they look and not what they've done. I'm going to give it to Amina to be delivered to the table.

### ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough's oldest and most well-established community; and

"Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

"Whereas historically Agincourt's electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

"Whereas communities, such as Scarborough–Agincourt, with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

**1340**

"Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

"Whereas 'community of interest' is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

"Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

"Whereas the commission's report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

"Whereas the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety, with its north Scarborough neighbours;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough–Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401."

I fully support the petition and give it to Theodore.

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to present my petition from my riding of Durham. The lead petitioner here is Luverne Baron, who represents Model "A" Acres Bed and Breakfast.

The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08, public health inspectors



are required to undertake risk assessments of small drinking water systems;

"Whereas many of these small drinking water systems are located in homes operating bed and breakfasts in rural Ontario;

"Whereas private homes that are the sites of bed and breakfasts already have potable drinking water used by the homeowners and their families every day;

"Whereas many of these bed and breakfasts have established the quality of their drinking water through years of regular testing;

"Whereas these home-based businesses are facing high costs" and red tape "to comply with the new requirements of regulation 319/08;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Health amend Ontario regulation 319/08 to give the testing track record of a small drinking water system greater weight in the risk assessment process. Furthermore we, the undersigned, ask that bed and breakfasts operated within a private home with a drinking water supply meeting all the requirements of a private home not be subject to regulation 319/08."

I'm pleased to sign and support this and present it to Nicholas, one of the pages, on his last day. Congratulations, Nicholas.

#### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I have another petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the process popularly known as 'declawing' is actually an amputation, that is the equivalent of cutting off a human's fingers from the knuckle up;

"Whereas the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association considers 'declawing' to be an unnecessary cosmetic procedure;

"Whereas research has shown that declawing a cat significantly reduces a cat's quality of life and leads to behavioural and health problems;

"Whereas declawing eliminates a cat's ability to defend itself when in danger; and

"Whereas the process is considered to be inhumane and is banned in more than 40 countries;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To ban the unnecessary and inhuman procedure known as 'declawing' in the province of Ontario."

I support this and will give this to page Annie to deliver.

#### CHILDREN'S PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATION

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there has been a dramatic increase in the use of psychiatric medication on children especially children in care or provincial custody; and

"Whereas it is an established scientific fact that psychiatric drugs cause shrinkage and related problems to ... the development of the still-developing brain; and

"Whereas it is our responsibility as a society to protect and care for our children;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To create a policy statement discouraging the use of psychiatric drugs on children and send it to all Ontario clinics and mental health care facilities working with children;

"To actively monitor the rate of use of psychiatric drugs on children to ensure that it is going down;

"To amend the professional misconduct regulation under the Medicine Act so that prescribing medication to children where the use of such medication has not been specifically approved by Health Canada for their age group and purpose constitutes professional misconduct, also to alter OHIP practices such that such use is not covered."

I affix my signature in support.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from the people of the northeast.

"Whereas the Ontario government has made ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients...; and

"Whereas, since October 2009, insured PET scans are performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with Health Sciences North, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through Health Sciences North, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the" people of the northeast.

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Glory to bring it to the Clerk.

#### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, I'm still receiving a lot of petitions signed by people around the province of Ontario, and it starts with, "Stop the tire fee increases."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

"Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

"Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

"Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

"Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs."

I affix my signature as I agree with this petition.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from all over Ontario:

"Whereas there are a growing number of reported cases of abuse, neglect and substandard care for our seniors in long-term-care homes; and

"Whereas people with complaints have limited options, and frequently don't complain because they fear repercussions, which suggests too many seniors are being left in vulnerable situations without independent oversight; and

"Whereas Ontario is one of only two provinces in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have independent oversight of long-term-care homes. We need accountability, transparency and consistency in our long-term-care home system"—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That would be good.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Absolutely.

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand the Ombudsman's mandate to include Ontario's long-term-care homes in order to protect our most vulnerable seniors."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it, and ask page Nicholas, on his last day, to bring it to the Clerk.

### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm pleased to present a petition which affects my riding of Durham and I'm reading it on their behalf.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84" and as high as "\$1,311.24;

"Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

"Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge" a minimal fee of "up to \$75;

"Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealers; and

"Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs."

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents, and present it to Kamryn, one of the pages, on her last day here.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### POOLED REGISTERED PENSION PLANS ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES RÉGIMES DE PENSION AGRÉÉES COLLECTIFS

Mrs. Munro moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 50, An Act to require the introduction of legislation to allow for pooled registered pension plans / Projet de loi 50, Loi exigeant la présentation d'un projet de loi afin d'autoriser les régimes de pension agréés collectifs.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

1350

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Before I begin, I would just like to have the members recognize two constituents of mine: Steve Palmer from the Georgina Chamber of Commerce and Munawar Chudary from the Bradford Board of Trade. Thank you for coming.

I am very pleased to speak to this House about the important issue of pooled registered pension plans, or PRPPs. This is an idea that our party proposed in a white paper we issued last year called *Paths to Prosperity: Sustainable Retirement Security*. Bill 50, we are debating today, would require the Minister of Finance to introduce a bill to establish PRPPs in Ontario within 180 days of receiving royal assent. If this bill passes, it would give the government plenty of time to consult with stakeholders and write a bill that would let people start investing in their own pooled pensions very quickly.

In my remarks, I will address why PRPPs are necessary and how they would work. I will outline the actions taken by the federal government and other provinces, and



I will speak to what small businesses are telling us about PRPPs.

In doing the research for our white paper, one of the key problems we identified is that people in Ontario are not saving enough for their retirements. Only about 40% of Canadians are members of a workplace pension plan. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says that 79% of small businesses in Canada don't offer a company pension plan. People can also save on their own through RRSPs, but only about 30% are taking advantage of this.

These rates of savings for retirement are too low, and likely reflect that too many people never learned how to save or the importance of saving. Knowing the best saving options can be difficult, and we as a society need to do a better job of teaching financial literacy in Ontario. People need this knowledge in order to take a greater measure of responsibility for their future, and we know the majority of people are concerned about how ready they are for retirement.

A recent Forum Research survey found that most Canadians lack confidence in their ability to prepare for retirement. Approximately 55% felt that their retirement would not be adequately funded, 37% said it would be and 8% didn't know. This is a huge challenge for individuals who may not have enough to retire on and for governments who may be called upon to help those in need when they retire. In order to encourage all Ontarians to save for retirement, we need to ensure a variety of choices. This is why we are strongly supportive of PRPPs to fill the gap in our retirement system.

I think it is vital to offer people a new savings option, one that is easy to follow and lets people start saving on their own, and it is why we believe that Ontario should immediately start working with the federal government to bring in PRPPs. I applaud the federal government for passing legislation to make it possible for the provinces to implement PRPPs. We salute the federal government for taking this step, and we hope the provinces will follow suit.

Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Alberta have introduced PRPP legislation. Quebec and other provinces plan to do so soon, but for PRPPs to happen, Ontario needs to act. Only 10% of employees are covered by federal pension legislation; 90% of employees are under provincial jurisdiction, with about a third of them in Ontario. Until Ontario acts, it is probably not worthwhile for financial institutions to set up PRPPs.

Unfortunately, the government has shown no interest in providing our citizens with this tool designed for retirement security. PRPPs would be designed to address the gap in the retirement income system by providing a new, accessible, large-scale and low-cost defined contribution option to employers, employees and the self-employed.

PRPPs would create a simple, easy-to-use system for automatic saving. We want to make saving as easy as possible. Having a pension plan through a workplace is a great opportunity for all Ontario workers to automatically

start saving when they start a new job. For anyone who has a pension plan through work, you know how easy it is when you can just check a box and you are instantly in the program. We want to make sure that all Ontarians are saving for retirement, and that includes providing various ways they are able to save.

Self-employed workers who, of course, do not have a company pension plan, would benefit as well through the opportunity to join a pooled pension. PRPPs would also be portable between employers, letting people take their pensions with them if they get a new job. It would also be possible to take PRPPs to other provinces that recognize them. Ontario should work with the federal government to design a strong system and ensure that tax rules allow savers to maximize their returns without unnecessary clawbacks or penalties when they access their money after retirement.

I would like to see a PRPP system that is easy for employers to offer and easy for employees who want to contribute. But some people might ask, "Why not just encourage more savings in RRSPs or group RRSPs?" Fewer than a third of people are currently using RRSPs to save, and pooled pensions offer a strong alternative. Economies of scale would make PRPPs considerably less to administer than is possible through the RRSP process. So there will likely be a fee advantage to offer in the PRPP. Large-scale investment is also possible with PRPPs because of the large pool of investors.

So what do small businesses think of PRPPs? According to a CFIB poll of its own members, 34% have already said they would offer PRPPs, and another 30% would consider it. I believe that if PRPPs were available, other businesses could see the benefits of them and would be encouraged to offer them to their employees. Why? Because it's a competitive advantage. It's a way to attract employees and keep administrative costs for pensions low. Plans would be portable, so employees could move from one job to another with ease. Business contributions to PRPPs would not be required but they could make them voluntarily.

Here's what the CFIB had to say: "PRPPs will be an excellent addition to the retirement savings options for small business owners and their employees. Small firms tell us that the main reasons 80% of them do not have any form of company retirement plan for the business owner or their employees are the costs and administrative burden of offering a plan. If properly implemented by provinces and financial institutions, we expect PRPPs to move the ball forward on both fronts."

Terry Campbell, president of the Canadian Bankers Association, agrees with the CFIB. He said, "PRPPs will make it possible for small and medium-sized businesses to offer to their employees registered pension plans that will be simple to administer. As well, PRPPs will allow self-employed individuals to participate in private sector pension plans for the first time."

I've personally spoken with representatives of some of the large banks and other financial industries. They see PRPPs as an attractive product they want to offer. They

know how difficult it is for people to be able to feel comfortable about saving, to understand what the choices are and to look at some of the obstacles that they have. The PRPP is designed to take away those obstacles, to provide people with an option to save that they can take with them to a new employer or move to a participating province.

1400

When it comes to more savings options, I do not see why working people should have to wait. We already allow savings through RRSPs; why not add the option of pooled pensions? To our party, it seems obvious: People are able to be given another tool to save. Pooled pensions would make it easy for workers to save in large pools that could be invested to grow; the larger the pool of investors, the lower the cost of administration. PRPPs would open the door for any employee currently excluded to secure a more stable financial future. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm a bit torn here. I don't want to get in the way of giving somebody an opportunity to provide for their retirement. I think that's motherhood and apple pie; I get that. But this is more of the same from the right wing that we've been hearing for a long time. Rather than saying what this province needs, and what workers across this entire province need, is a mechanism for them to be able to retire by way of a defined pension plan, we should be looking at what we can do in order to make it easier and make it more efficient for people to be able to contribute to some form of defined pension plan similar to the CPP, which we as New Democrats have proposed here in Ontario, called the Ontario pension plan, or some other similar idea would be a good way to go forward.

We could look at ourselves in this Legislature to see how much of a failure the RRSP has been for members of this Legislature. Listen, we used to have what was called a gold-plated pension in this place. I know that Conservatives are interested in bringing back a defined pension plan for members. That's something they've talked to me about on a number of occasions, and I agree. I think all workers in this province, including MPPs and anybody else who works for a living, who has a wage or who has a business and has a wage through doing a business activity should have an opportunity to build a good pension. A defined pension plan has been proven to be the best way to do it.

I agree with one of the arguments she has put forward. People, if left to their own devices, will not put money away for retirement. That is just a known fact; you only have to take a look at the stats across this province, across this country and, I would say, across most of the industrial world. Very few people, if left to their own devices, will ever start putting money away to build a pension plan—RRSP or defined pension plan. When you're 20 years old, you never think that 55 years old is going to come; you never think that 65 years is going to

come. So you think, "That's not important. I have lots of time to build a pension." But we all know that if you don't start saving up for a pension early, you're not going to have a very good pension when you are 55 or 65 years old.

I agree with the concept that we need to find vehicles to give people an ability to provide money on a monthly basis from a young age to be able to build a good pension plan later on in life. But I would argue, as a person who has an RRSP, God no, I don't want to go there. I've seen the vagaries of the market and what it has done to my investments and what it's done to the investments of all the members of this assembly, as it has for all our constituents.

I'll tell you a story of a friend of mine who had just retired for a couple of years. He had a fair amount of money in RRSPs, and he had decided, for whatever reason, to leave his money in a fairly risky type of investment. He was in small caps and different types of things; he was not in bonds or GICs or even the money market. He was essentially in small caps. Well, we had the meltdown that happened, what, three or four years ago—whatever it was. He lost 50% of his investment. The worst part is, he panicked and sold at the low. So he went from being a person who had probably around \$500,000 for his retirement to somebody who only had \$250,000 for his retirement, and it's meant that he now has to make a decision: "Do I sell the cottage, or do I sell the house?" If he hadn't lost that \$250,000, it would be a moot point.

That's part of the problem with an investment-style strategy such as an RRSP. There are years when you make big amounts of money; there's no question. Everybody in this assembly and anybody who has been in RRSPs has had years when they made 10%, 15%; some have done better. But every now and then you get that market adjustment, and whatever you've gained you end up losing. So I personally don't like the idea of an RRSP. As somebody who has been in it for some time now—I've been a member of this assembly for 23 years. We lost our pensions when I got here, after about year six, and we've been on an RRSP plan ever since. What my RRSPs have been able to generate as far as investment is nowhere near what I would get even on a 2% pension plan. If I had a 2% pension here at Queen's Park—let's say we were in the OPS plan and I had a 2% pension, as any other civil servant has in the province of Ontario. The money that has been generated in my RRSPs can never buy me what 2% would have gotten me. So I'm not a big fan.

I understand what the member is trying to do. She's saying that for some this may be the only option. I would argue that there are other options. We should be seriously looking at how we provide the ability for people to get into, as employers and employees, defined pension plans. For example, why don't we allow the ability to pool defined pension plans together so that if you're a small employer of three people or 10 people or 100 people and you don't want to go out and reinvent the wheel and



build some sort of pension plan that could be quite onerous, you say, "Listen, we'll let you get into a pooled defined pension plan system that's already set up and all you and your employee have to do is make a contribution"? If the employer is prepared to give 6%, 8% or 10% per year and the employee does the same, they just go into the defined pension plan and build themselves a decent pension for the time of retirement. That would be the smart thing to do.

The problem with the legislation that's being proposed is that, although it will provide some ability for some people to have some type of pension, it's really not going to deal with the larger problem, which is that most people, left to their own devices, will not provide for retirement.

I would bet—and I'll just close on this—that if members had an ability to bring back not even the old members' pension plan, but just to put us into the OPS pension plan, I think there's not a member in this House who would not jump at the opportunity to go into a defined pension plan under the OPS, which is 2% per year—far more than we would get with the contributions we're not getting through RRSPs.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We're kind of hard pressed to identify a challenge that's more pervasive, that affects more people, than their retirement savings. Here we are, arguably the richest country in the world. Arguably, our generation is economically the most successful, and the vast majority of people are going to retire in poverty.

As people go through the baby boomer generation, people who don't have pensions, which is two thirds of folks, are going to create an economically consequential situation because the middle-class consumer buying power of people in retirement is quite difficult.

I look at my mother, who's in her mid-80s now. We had a small family business; there was no pension. My father passed away just past the age of 60. Family income ended much sooner, so now I and my sister support my mom because her pension isn't enough to even support her in a modest apartment. It's very hard to see a very dignified person who has worked all their life not having the benefits of a pension plan. No one in her family lived that long, and she's healthy, thank God. I expect she'll be around for another 10 or 20 years, God bless, and I hope.

But that's not fair. For me, who doesn't have a pension plan, now having to support my mother and children who have some challenges—it's very hard to sustain yourself. I also am finding that most of us are living longer.

So I want to say to my friend from York-Simcoe that she has my support and I believe the support of most members of our party in this effort. Ms. Munro and I have chatted about this a number of times. She's shown some really remarkable leadership here and I want to commend her on it. This is a very pragmatic solution, and she mentions the other provinces that have done that. I think this is a good way to go.

I'm also prepared to work with you after today to try and make sure we realize this in law. As you may know, the government put this in the 2012 budget and made a commitment that we would bring something forward on this. You've heard me say, Mr. Speaker, a number of times that I think this House is way too partisan, that it prevents us from doing the very practical, good things that all Ontarians who vote for us, whatever party they vote for, send us here to solve, these very practical problems that people have. There are some things that shouldn't get ideological. We're all so crowded in the political centre, I find ideology a little humorous. You know, there's a Monty Python skit in the making for this era of politics, I think. But here's something very pragmatic.

1410

I also want to just acknowledge the comments from my friend from Timiskaming-James Bay, because I totally agree with him.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** James Bay-Timiskaming? Did I get it backwards?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Timmins-James Bay.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Timmins-James Bay. Because they are not either/or issues. He makes the point that while there's progress here, the big challenge is that this doesn't work for a lot of folks. Former Minister Duncan, Premier Selinger in Manitoba, Premier Wynne and Premier McGuinty, Premier Dexter in Nova Scotia, and the Premiers in New Brunswick and a lot of Atlantic Canada have been pressing for something that has been a priority for this government and continues to be—I think we are on the same page with the New Democrats on this—that we have to increase CPP contributions.

There was a motion, an attempt made. My friend Paul Moist, the national president of CUPE, did a huge amount of research on how little this would cost us and how much it would mean as far as sustained incomes and dignified retirements for all Canadians. So our government's view is that we need to do both. We need to have a partnership in this House where we improve CPP conditions to make sure that there isn't another generation like my mother's, who fortunately has kids who can support her.

We also think that what the Conservatives are proposing is a positive step forward. So I would like to ask my friends in the official opposition if we cannot move forward. There are a lot of members in your party in different governments who have been very supportive of enhanced CPP payments. We know—and I think the member from Timmins-James Bay made that point—this just simply will not work for the majority of people who don't have pensions. It's certainly a positive step forward. I'm hoping all parties will support the member from York-Simcoe's motion, because it is a constructive thing. If we can just get out of this—that we all have to have it our way all the time. One of the reasons I respect the member from York-Simcoe—I think we've developed a very good friendship over the three years I've

been here—is that there are many of us in each party who really want to put the public good first. I think in principle we could support enhanced CPP. We can do that in our own interests; we can do that by supporting this.

I'm hoping that maybe one of the things we could commit to the people of Ontario to do is to actually fix, in the next few weeks, this pension issue, once and for all, because I think there are reasonable people in all parties. I'm on the Freedom 155 program. I was very much like the person from Timmins—James Bay. I've been in the private sector a lot of the time in my life. I've owned my own business. I've paid people. If you've been in the private sector, in small business, you know you're the last one to be paid. You pay your employees, you pay your pension contributions, you pay your rent, you do all of those things, and you try not to lose too much sleep and hope that you get that next contract that keeps you flowing. Small business, especially in the last five years, has really struggled through some very dramatic ups and downs. My pension retirement savings were destroyed in the 2008 recession—I launched my business in 2008—eventually recovered, but you can never buy back that; and especially if you're in public life, your reputation is very important, so you live so much in the middle of the law that you overpay your obligations and you don't take risks.

For all of us who are dedicated to public service, this is important. Bill Davis used to say that the one thing you get in public service is—you get little time for your family, your reputation takes a hammering, but you do get a reasonable income and you get a pension, and you'll never have to worry about retiring.

The Harris government, sadly—and this is not an attack on them—in the ideology of the day broke that back, and I think all of us have regretted that. And for those of us in this House who don't have pensions, which is most of us, who are on the Freedom 155 program, I think we know personally the anxiety this means for our families and our friends. So why don't we try to fix this, not just for ourselves, but for everyone?

To my friend Ms. Munro, thank you very much. This is real leadership.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate kicked off by our member from York—Simcoe, who has really grasped on to this pension thing and taken it as a bit of a religion and on a road show to talk about this.

I would agree, though, that members of the third party and members of the government have probably talked a bit too much about ourselves as members of the Legislature and the fact that we don't have pensions anymore. But that is a fact that I hear often in newsletter responses and things like that from residents in my riding. They all believe that we have these gold-plated pension plans, and we simply don't have them. So let's get that on the record as a fact.

I would just like to address some of the comments made by the member of the third party who spoke earlier.

I mean, defined benefit pension plans at this time simply are not affordable in the province of Ontario, and the government minister who just spoke, as well, talked about the fact that we need to increase the CPP by a point. I think in great times that might be an option here in Ontario, but certainly we're in the midst of a terrible economic crisis in this province right now, a jobs and economy crisis. These aren't the times to be making those kinds of moves. We simply can't afford them when you're running multi-billion dollar deficits year after year. We've seen this government double the debt over the last 10 years. We're paying \$11 billion a year to service that debt in the province. That's money that simply isn't going into our programs and isn't allowing us to improve programs like this.

I would just like to speak to this bill and the PRPP in itself. It's something that I've heard an awful lot about as the small business and red tape critic in the province for the official opposition and in meeting with business owners and with members of the CFIB, like Satinder Chera and Plamen Petkov. Eighty per cent of the small business owners out there don't have a retirement plan in place for their employees. Many of them would like the opportunity to do that, and that's why this PRPP is a great option. We're seeing other western provinces buy into this. As the member said earlier, BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan all have legislation to propose PRPPs for their employees in the province who don't have any kind of retirement savings. Only 40% of Ontario workers—and I believe Ms. Munro mentioned that number earlier—are part of a workplace pension plan, and it is a fact.

While there won't be a wholesale buy-in by all employers out there, there are many who are very interested in providing this type of program for their employees, both to give them some income security and retirement security and to also attract employees to come to their business and stay in their business and have a career. It also has the flexibility that would allow them to take that pension with them if they moved on to another employer who would offer a similar type of advantage for them.

Industry associations in my riding—and I have a perfect example. It's the Prince Edward County Winegrowers Association. A PRPP would be a great example for this type of industry. The wine industry in the county is growing now. It's employing more and more people all the time. If we could restrict some of the red tape that they're facing in that industry, they would grow even more and create hundreds and hundreds of jobs. These county residents deserve a retirement plan, but many of their employers are so burdened by the agricultural red tape that exists out there, they're operating on margins that are far too small for them to offer any kind of pension plan. If PECWA was able to get its members together, though, to form a PRPP, the ability to offer a retirement plan to employees would suddenly become a reality, and these are examples that I'm hearing right across the province.

Over the last year, as I say, I've had a chance to visit 30 different ridings in the province, and different



communities in those ridings, and talk to small business people in those ridings. We need retirement security for all of our business owners in the province.

I think it's time that we moved quickly on this PRPP. I don't think we need to put any attachments on it, like a rise in the CPP, at this time.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I have to admit I have some sympathy for the argument that the member from York-Simcoe puts forth in her Bill 50, except I have some concerns.

Some of the concerns were expressed by the member from Prince Edward-Hastings when he said that we cannot afford a defined benefit plan anymore. So while the Minister of Transportation was saying it's neither/or, the member from Prince Edward-Hastings is saying we can't afford the defined plan anymore. The defined plan is where an employer puts a contribution, the worker puts a contribution, and, based on the number of years worked, you get a defined plan at the end of it, which gives you a great deal of financial security at the end of it.

So the concern I have with the arguments a number of Conservatives make, that we cannot any longer afford a defined plan, which almost suggests an attack on the defined plans we already have in the public sector, and presumably the private sector, which suggests we can't afford any defined plan anywhere, private or public—that worries me a great deal, because any other plan is a casino plan. Any other plan is, you are at the mercy of the markets—God bless—and the markets don't give you the return you think you might be getting. Any one moment, any one day, any time of the year, it goes up and it goes down. And if you happen to be retiring at that down period, good luck. But then's the breaks, because that's the kind of plan that we are talking about. So the real problem is that we have pension insecurity in this country and in this province. That's what we have.

1420

Now remember, if you're earning what we earn, our capacity to put money into the RRSP is quite good. So we could put into our RRSP up to \$19,000. Many who have high incomes are actually putting a whole lot of money aside; it reduces their taxable income, and they pay less taxes, socking away a little money for a retirement plan—still the market, still a casino. But at least some of these wealthy individuals are able to put a whole lot of money aside, and that's okay for them. But there are a whole lot of other people who, although they have the tax room, are not using it all up because they don't have the ability to do so. So even though there is room, there is no ability to put extra money into that fund. That's one side of the problem.

The other side of the problem, the bigger one, is that the majority of human beings in this province, in this country, can't even afford to put \$1,000 aside on their RRSP because they don't have any to put aside because they use up all of their income on either paying a

mortgage—assuming they can afford to have a home—or paying the rent and the other necessities that they need. If they don't have a health plan or a dental plan because they don't have such security or such benefits, they've got to pay out of their own shallow pockets to pay for those benefits. The problem is the majority of people don't have the ability to do that.

So some Conservative members suggest that we need to have some plan that allows them to do that. If only they had the money to do that, I suspect they would. The problem isn't that they're not doing it because they don't want to; the problem is they're not doing it because they don't have the money to do it. So while the scheme sounds nice—which is a good benefit for the banks, God bless them, and other insurance companies, God bless them as well, because they would be able to pool all that money, and the banks would have all those extra dollars that they would be able to invest for their shareholders. By the way, the little people would not be good shareholders there because they don't got no money to put in them bags. The shareholders are the ones who have the big bucks. They would benefit because the management fees would be 2% as opposed to the management fees that the CPP charges in its management of its fees. You would erode whatever few benefits get into that plan if the management fees are incredibly high—as we suspect they would be. So some people will benefit to have an extra pool of money to manage.

But overall, the real problem is that we don't have any money left to be able to put into some kind of pool. Unless we look at creating a defined plan for more and more workers, they will be poor, because what you've got at the end of it, if you've been here for 40 years, is a CPP plan, which will give maximum \$10,500, and the old age security, which will give you maximum \$5,000. All you've got at the end of it, if you don't have any other plan, is \$15,000. That ain't very much.

While the suggestion presented here today seems cool, it's not the best possible option we should be working on.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** It's always a pleasure to follow my friend from Trinity-Spadina, whom I can sum up by saying, "I'd be wealthy if only I could afford it."

Being born between the end of World War II and the mid-1960s makes me a member of North America's largest and best-known demographic group, which is of course the baby boom. We have had hospitals and schools, subdivisions, universities and infrastructure all built for our generation. Now it's time to take some action on our own behalf, and that is to prepare for our retirement. In fact, it's time for other generations to join us and to do likewise.

This bill asks Ontario to introduce a legal framework for a class of defined contribution pension plan called a pooled registered pension plan. Now, what is a pooled registered pension plan? The C.D. Howe Institute called them "RRSPs with a new coat of paint." By that they mean that a pooled registered pension plan isn't a magic

wand, and it's not a panacea. But for the member from York-Simcoe, in fairness, she doesn't represent it as that, and there is, in fact, nothing inherently wrong with nuanced differences between similar classes of products. If it provides more choice for people saving for their retirement or, indeed, encourages young people to start to save at all for their later years—later years that all of us know come sooner than later for you, sooner than you realize—then I have no trouble with this bill.

One way to go beyond an extension of the existing class of pension products, however, would be to do as my friends from Timmins-James Bay and Trinity-Spadina suggest, and that would be to enhance the Canada Pension Plan. While that's not the subject of this bill, I feel that some discussion of the CPP can put the proposal—which has merit—from the member for York-Simcoe in a little bit of perspective.

When the original assumptions underlying the CPP were made, the centennial year in Canada, 1967, was still years away. Indeed, at that time, the Toronto Maple Leafs were still a perennial Stanley Cup contender; now that really was a long time ago. It was reasonably expected back then that a man's expected lifetime would seldom extend beyond a decade past his retirement, and a woman could expect perhaps half a dozen years extra on top of that. However, today, a healthy male ought to enjoy about two decades of productive and active life beyond retirement, women can expect to live into their late eighties and into their nineties, and a child born in this year has about a 50-50 chance of celebrating his or her 100th birthday in good health.

This positions Bill 50 as part of the pension solution mosaic, as I am sure the member intends it, but we do need some options to help us dedicate some of our earnings to saving for our later years, and we need to help young people grasp that a dollar saved early—whether that dollar is in an RRSP or a pooled registered pension plan, whether that dollar is in a tax-free savings account or a brokerage trading account—that early dollar is worth more, many times more, than a dollar saved decades later.

This is not the kind of bill in which we should engage in “you did this on your watch” type of rhetoric or trot out whatever the party mantra of the day is, but it is a bill that's contemplative. It is a very thoughtful bill that allows us to broaden the choices available to people everywhere. It should also be a reason to engage the federal government in discussions on pension reform.

We need all jointly sponsored pension plans to move quickly to 50-50 funding between employers and employees. We need all parties in this Legislature to press the federal government to enhance the Canada Pension Plan and to make the Canada Pension Plan for the 21st century the type of plan we would responsibly design today if we were starting with a clean sheet of paper. We can afford that, and the time to do that is now. We need strong regulatory oversight to ensure that pension plans are not looted by avaricious corporate management, nor plundered by excessive fund administration fees, and not

invested in an unbalanced and excessively risky asset portfolio.

Ontario's 2012 budget proposed the essence of what is in the member's bill, hence I am perfectly willing to support it. It is gratifying to see that the member for York-Simcoe and her party embrace a truly Ontario good idea, and I do hope that this passes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I want to, first of all, compliment the member from York-Simcoe for bringing up such an important concern that we all share. The solutions are complicated, and I think she has an excellent grasp of the issue.

I think some of the stuff I'm hearing from the third party causes me a great deal of alarm. We should have an honest conversation on this. As many of the people have said, the current reality is that the actuarial assumptions in pensions—all three assumptions are wrong.

**1430**

First of all, life expectancy isn't 74; it's 94. The number of people working at organizations—I worked at General Motors—used to be 25,000 or 30,000. Now it's 5,000. The number of people paying into organizations has totally changed. No company will last 30 years. Look at Research in Motion, Nortel, all those companies. They're downsizing and outsourcing, so there's fewer people paying.

The final assumption is the return on equity. The pension premiums that you pay in are actuarially supposed to be 7%. Nobody is getting 7% now. And it's got to be patient capital, so it's got to be a 1% or 2% return. It's not sustainable. I know we need a new model. In fact, one of the best suggestions I heard was from the Steelworkers union. They have a proposal that I think is important—I think I've mentioned it to Jim Flaherty, the Minister of Finance, and that is that what we should be doing is allowing an optional Canada pension contribution. It's already a fund. Now, the return on funds basically is leveraged by the size of the fund, and the Canada pension is the most leveraged fund in Canada; it's the largest, most well-resourced fund and the best-managed fund in all of Canada, including all the private sector pensions.

Here's the reality: In Ontario, under the public sector unions—and this is not vilifying them; they did not make the decisions—we owe \$100 billion in liabilities. The teachers' pension plan is short \$40 billion; OMERS and OPSEU are about \$5 billion to \$8 billion short. Every single one of them is not funded. If you look at the public sector settlements, they're all done by factors. I'll give you an example of what a factor is. For a fireman in Ontario it's a 75 factor. That means you start when you're 25. You work for 25 years, so you're 50 years of age then, and you have 25 years of service so you retire at 50, and you get a pension based on a function of your last three years. Their first five years they probably earned \$10,000. They'll get more in their first year than they made in the first 10 years that they worked. It's



simply not sustainable. I'm angry, like everyone else, because I'm probably one of the older ones here. It's sad and tragic. Something should be done about it. But I'll tell you this: We each individually have a collective responsibility. You can't shift it off to some employer, because I'll tell you, no employer is going to last 30 years. Not Research in Motion, not BlackBerry, not any company that you know today will be here in 10 years. Who's going to take the liability then? It won't be the government under the Canada pension benefit act.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Today I am proud to stand in my place to speak in support of a good bill, Bill 50, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, put forward by my colleague the member from York-Simcoe. This bill, if passed, will require the Minister of Finance to come forward with enabling legislation in 180 days.

Pooled registration pension plans, or PRPPs, are a new kind of defined contribution pension plan that should be available to employers, employees and the self-employed. The federal government passed the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act last summer. Now it is up to the Ontario government to allow them to be made available for the benefit of Ontarians.

PRPPs will increase the options available to Ontarians for saving for their retirement. PRPPs provide a new accessible, straightforward and low-cost retirement saving option for employers to offer to their employees. They allow individuals who currently may not participate in a pension plan, such as the self-employed or employees of companies that do not offer a pension plan, to have a pension plan.

In contrast to RRSPs, participants will be able to benefit from the lower investment management costs that result from membership in a large pooled pension plan. And PRPPs are portable, so an employee's accumulated benefits move with the employee from job to job.

Also in contrast to RRSPs, pooled registered pension plans will be subject to a higher standard of financial supervision than RRSPs because of their status as pension plans.

Nonetheless, PRPPs are not meant to replace RRSPs. PRPPs are simply another option that Ontarians can use to help them prepare for independent retirement living.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** First of all, I'd like to commend my colleague the member for York-Simcoe for introducing this modest yet sorely needed piece of legislation.

Ontarians are increasingly worried about their ability to save money for retirement. At the same time, it's harder for governments to ensure that pensions will be there when their citizens need them most. This is also crucial for those in the public sector, as the Liberal government has more than doubled the provincial debt in the last 10 years. It's all about ability to pay.

Pooled pensions are aimed primarily at those working in small to medium-sized businesses, as well as self-

employed individuals. Throughout my previous professional training and development career, spanning over 25 years, I would often tell participants that they must become their own best form of pension plan for their retirement—don't solely rely on your employer, as many will have had several employers during their careers.

That's what I've been practising for many years, since being self-employed. And just for the record, those of us working for the public as MPPs don't receive a pension from the government upon leaving this honourable profession. This bill also presents a way to provide a new option to the pension issue; one that is low-cost for employees and employers, and that allows employees to take their pension with them from job to job.

I feel that this is a reasonable bill for the government to support, because it doesn't tie the hands of the Minister of Finance. It allows the government to consult with groups representing employees, employers and the financial services industry. The minister can decide whether it will be mandatory or voluntary for employers to offer pooled pensions. It's a call to action that puts the ball back in the government's hands.

The government of Canada has already passed legislation, and their pooled pension plan came into effect last December. Ontario cannot afford to be left behind. Therefore, I call on the government to support this bill and help ease the burden on a pension system that is struggling to keep up. If we don't do something, we're going to be looking at people down the road who will have absolutely nothing at all. We need to help them.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. The member for York-Simcoe, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I appreciate the comments made this afternoon by the members for Timmins-James Bay and Prince Edwards-Hastings, the Minister of Transportation, and the members for Trinity-Spadina, Mississauga-Streetsville, Chatham-Kent-Essex and Carleton-Mississippi Mills.

I have a very brief time to make any response, and there are a couple of things. One of the speakers mentioned the vagaries of the market. Well, it immediately sets in front of my mind some ability to cut out the hills and make the depressions of the valleys go away. I don't think that is a part of life. So while he's talking about economic hills and valleys, that's part of life, and I think it's impossible to take them away.

To those who talked about the question of an enhanced CPP, I don't consider these two to be mutually exclusive, but I do think it's an opportunity for us to jump in and get with the program of the federal government and the other provinces.

I'll finish with a quote. This comes from Greg Farrell, who is the president and chief operating officer of Giant Tiger: "As a private Canadian company operating in a hyper-competitive industry, the challenge of ensuring a secure retirement in the future for our team members is a significant one. It is equally challenging for our team members to save and plan for this inevitable period of

one's life. The introduction of PRPP as a viable, low-cost retirement savings option is a welcomed product to the retirement savings marketplace. Knowing that our team members' retirement savings are being managed with proper levels of risk and reward parameters gives us, as an employer, greater piece of mind in knowing that our team members will be prepared better for their retirement years."

Mr. Speaker, that's why we're here.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We'll vote on this at the end of all private members' business.

### HOME CARE

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, Ontario should implement a five-day home care guarantee in order to eliminate the home care wait-list of over 6,000 people and reduce home care wait times that can be in excess of 260 days. The home care guarantee shall be funded by capping hospital CEO salaries and finding administrative and procurement savings in the local health integration networks and the community care access centres.

1440

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Ms. Armstrong has moved private member's notice of motion number 19. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. Good afternoon to everyone. As folks know, I put forward a motion to help seniors get home care when they need it, with a guaranteed wait time of five days. This is also one of the key items New Democrats want to see included in the budget that will be tabled in this House on May 2. New Democrats need a guarantee from this government, a guarantee that seniors will finally get what they have been waiting for for far too long.

From nurses to doctors, from ministers to experts, everyone agrees that home care is cost-effective and makes a real difference in the life of seniors, and yet we have a system that's not reflecting that reality. According to Ontario's Auditor General, some Ontarians are waiting as long as 262 days to receive home care services, and currently there are approximately 6,100 Ontarians on a waiting list for home care, Ontarians like Elba, who wrote us. She lives in Toronto and she wrote this:

"I think that the waiting for home care services is [so long] on the hope that people will drop dead while waiting.... It's very terrifying becoming older, weaker and sick in this country. I won't have someone like myself to fight" for me "as I did for my husband."

Women like Elba need to see a real guarantee that they won't be waiting longer than five days when they need home care. That's why I'm putting forward a home care guarantee, to ensure that all seniors, no matter where they live, will have access to home care within five days of being approved for service. This is realistic. This is achievable. This is a step that will make a real difference

in the lives of seniors and their families, and a positive change Ontarians want to see.

A senior that needs home care and is waiting close to a year to get that care is being ignored by this government. What recourse can she take? And what about her family, her daughter, her sister, her son, the people that are taking care of her? How will they handle their own jobs and added responsibility of taking care of their aging loved ones? Many of them are women who are also caring for their school-aged children. We know how much work they put in, and we know that they need our support.

Seniors have worked all their lives for their families and for this province. They deserve enough respect and consideration to provide them with a guarantee of care in their home when they need a hand.

Right now, Ontario seniors and their families have no idea how long they will be forced to wait. For patients released from hospital, the average wait time for home care is more than five days, according to Health Quality Ontario. For those who have not been in hospital but are put on a waiting list for home care in the community, the wait time is less clear. The Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres says most seniors wait an average of one month for care.

The lack of consistent information on expected wait times negatively impacts Ontarians, but even worse is the huge variation in accessibility of care. Depending on where you live in our province, in some communities timely care is available, but in others, sadly, the wait time can be as long as 262 days.

While we know there are 600 seniors on a wait-list for home care, many community care centres do not keep wait-list information, so there are likely other Ontarians who are not being counted and are going without care.

Today, 3,300 Ontarians are waiting for care by a personal support worker. An additional 2,800 Ontarians are waiting for service by therapists such as occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers.

In the 2011 election campaign, we had committed to clearing the home care wait-list of 10,000 Ontarians. We had estimated that this would have cost \$30 million. Today, we have updated figures on wait-list numbers as well as the cost of clearing this backlog. In order to meet the needs of the 3,300 Ontarians who are waiting for personal support worker care, Ontario needs to invest approximately \$10 million. In order to eliminate the wait-list for the other 2,800 people waiting for other non-nursing, non-personal support worker care, the cost would be \$10 million. Finally, we would create a flexible fund of \$10 million. This \$10 million would address the overruns in cost due to additional needs or to allow community care access centres to meet the five-day guarantee. In total, this commitment would cost \$30 million a year and would allow CCACs to eliminate wait-lists and add capacity to the system so that all Ontarians who need home care receive it within five days. New Democrats want to see the long-standing wait-list for home care cleared. It is up to this Liberal government to work with



community care access centres to remove obstacles to timely care.

This government recently made an announcement concerning home care and community care. They claimed to invest \$260 million and then omitted any details as to where this money will come from. In contrast to this government's announcement, the NDP's proposal is clear on how to pay for guaranteed home care within five days. Our costing has been fully laid out with the help of community care organizations and the latest information available. Our commitment would also cost \$30 million a year and it would allow community care access centres to eliminate the wait-lists and add capacity to the system so that all Ontarians who need home care within five days receive home care.

To pay for this plan we will put a hard cap on hospital CEO salaries, resulting in a savings of \$3.5 million. The other \$27 million can be found through standardizing procurement policies and streamlining administration at Ontario's local health integration networks and CCACs. In Ontario, there continues to be over two dozen hospital CEOs who make more than double the Premier's salary—over \$418,000. In some cases, CEOs within the public health care system are making close to \$1 million a year. These excesses fall on the shoulders of Ontarians who cannot afford to wait.

Irma in Ontario had a loved one receiving home care, and writes, "Based on my experience, I would say that the government was wasting far too much money on management and not spending wisely on ensuring that their clients are getting good care."

We can change this and use the money spent on high salaries of hospital CEOs to help thousands of Ontarians like Irma and her family. There are ways to better spend Ontario's precious health care dollars. In 2010 the Auditor General identified administrative costs at CCACs to be 9% of their total budget. In 2012, Don Drummond identified the potential to find up to \$1 billion in savings in health care, including the LHINs.

New Democrats have a solid, achievable plan to help Ontario seniors get home care when they need it the most. This government, however, continues to falter sadly when it comes to a definite commitment. The details of their home and community care announcement remain unclear, and this government refused to provide a technical briefing by the minister's office that would give us details of that announcement for this public debate. Instead of committing to a guarantee of a five-day maximum wait period, the government's announcements referred to a target of five days. This so-called target makes us believe that they aren't serious about enforcing a guarantee, and their so-called target will only be aimed at patients with complex illnesses and not moderately ill people, who are often forced to wait the longest.

**1450**

It is unclear what is new money and what is simply a re-announcement of already committed money. The government has criticized our costing but we have provided all information on how we got our numbers.

They have not done this at all. It is not fair to ask a senior to wait and wait and wait. They simply cannot afford to wait, nor can their families or their loved ones.

Further, the province cannot afford to spend more money providing inadequate care for seniors when better care can be provided at home. New Democrats' commitment of a five-day guarantee makes sense to seniors, makes sense to their families and makes sense to Ontario.

Now, this Liberal government needs to make sense and to support the five-day home care guarantee that New Democrats have put forward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'm pleased to speak to the private member's motion number 19, presented by the member from London—Fanshawe. Certainly, this transition into home care and away from more expensive care for seniors and others is well under way. It is the right direction to go. It's the action plan for health care; it's what we need to do. So we're moving health services to our communities, where the best quality care can be offered to people closer to home at a lower cost.

I was with Alex Munter at an event in Ottawa two years ago, and about 600 seniors were there. They asked for a show of hands of people who would prefer to be in a hospital or in long-term care or at home. Of course, there wasn't one hand that went up that didn't support staying in their own home. That's where we want to live. So I think that transition to home care is working well. It's the direction that we must go.

That's why our government was pleased to announce just a couple of days ago, on April 23, that we'll be investing \$260 million more in home community care to reduce wait times and provide better care for many people. Of this \$260 million in new funding, we estimate that \$185 million will go towards home care. This will fund more home care for approximately 46,000 more seniors, aligning with our Seniors Strategy, which also calls for increased access to home care.

Just last week our government announced it would be providing more than 200,000 additional seniors and patients with improved access to high-quality physiotherapy, exercise and falls prevention classes. Included here is in-home physiotherapy for 60,000 more seniors and people with mobility issues.

Our government is providing home care for 90,000 more seniors, adding 30,000 more house calls over the next three years. Our home care plan will also allow us to set a five-day wait time target for patients whose complex needs require home care from a nurse or a personal support worker. This will also free up hospital beds, which is already under way in many cities. Certainly in Ottawa, we've made a big dent into that problem, which was a historical problem. It'll create jobs. It'll strengthen the operability of our community care access centres.

Last week, I met with board of directors chair Mike Ennis—he was a former deputy minister here—and CEO Gilles Lantegnie, both from the Champlain Community Care Access Centre. They were very much in favour of

the direction we were going and certainly they'll be welcoming the new investments that the province is going to make. The Champlain CCAC acts as a key entry point to the regional health system, connecting 25,000 patients to a variety of services. Mr. Ennis and Mr. Lanteigne emphasized that home care forms a large part of their service delivery, and is the expanding part. Champlain CCAC service delivery reflects the funding increase to community care access centres since 2003. As a result of a 77% increase in funding to CCACs, our government is providing home care to over 215,000 more Ontarians. While wait times for services, when referred from hospitals, are fairly stable, the wait for care referred from the community is down by over 30%. We will continue to move forward with our action plan and Seniors Strategy, starting by making it easier for people who access community support services to get home care.

Our commitment to investing \$260 million more in home and community care next year and to set a five-day wait time target will happen by getting the best value for taxpayer dollars. Making the right choices as to where to invest to improve care is something we all agree on.

The NDP says that increased capping of hospital CEOs' salaries would provide more funding to improve home and community care, and I think we all agree with that, but we know the difficulties of what doctors get paid and what administration people get paid; we can all feel that those are on the high side, but that's the way it is in Canada. According to the Ontario Hospital Association, capping hospital CEO salaries, as was said by the third party member, would produce \$3.7 million per year. This only represents about 0.002% of hospitals' total expenditures, but it is important dollars, if we could save this.

This year alone, we are already investing over \$167 million more in home and community care. Most importantly, thanks to our government, there is presently no home care wait time for those who need care the most: the acute care.

Our government has set out a holistic and financially sound plan that strives to improve the status quo and will make sure Ontarians get the right care in the right place at the right time.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to the motion brought forward by the member from London—Fanshawe concerning the five-day home care guarantee. The member and the third party are calling our attention to the plight of Ontarians who are waiting for home care. As you may know, Mr. Speaker, there are currently approximately 6,000 people in Ontario waiting for home care services. Some Ontarians are left waiting for more than 260 days, or over six months, to access home care.

Clearly, this is not acceptable. The Progressive Conservatives believe that investing in home care is one of the best ways to improve health outcomes for Ontarians.

With good home care, people can stay in their homes and out of hospitals longer. This is good for patients' health because it lowers the risk of being exposed to infections in hospital, among other things. It's certainly good for the budget as well, because with better home care, we should see a reduction in unnecessary and very costly hospital visits.

Investing in home care is especially important for Ontarians living in the north, who experience the longest wait times for home care. It's also an important part of helping our population age. As Ontarians age, we want to maximize their independence by allowing them to stay in their homes for as long as possible. In order to do this, a wide variety of home care services must be made available.

We do agree with the third party that home care in Ontario needs to be augmented to ensure that people can access it in a timely manner, but we are concerned about where to find the funds to realize this goal. The third party has suggested that the funding will come from capping hospital CEO salaries and finding savings in the LHINs, the local health integration networks, and the CCACs, the community care access centres. But small cuts here and there in Ontario's massive health system are not going to be enough to fund such an ambitious—and worthwhile, I would say—goal. We need to look at areas where we can find substantial savings to reinvest in home care services.

That's why the Progressive Conservatives would eliminate the LHINs and the CCACs, which cost millions of dollars to run and prevent the integrated delivery of health care services in the province. Our vision for health care, as set out in our two health care white papers, is to put more money into front-line care and to give patients access to an integrated array of services in their region, with an emphasis on home care. Consultations with health care professionals, administrators and patients have told us that Ontarians want care closer to home. People are happiest and stay healthier longer when they can be in their own home in comfortable surroundings. It's also good news financially, because the costs of home care are far less than the costs of hospital stays, or even long-term-care stays.

The government members have told us with their announcement this week that they're going to invest \$185 million in home care in response to the third party's request for \$30 million. To that, I would say it's simply a hollow promise. I say that because we've heard this government make all kinds of promises in the past about improving health care, and what have we got to show for it? Ornge, eHealth and the list goes on.

In conclusion, I stand in support of the idea of a five-day home care guarantee and will certainly vote in favour of this motion.

1500

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Thank you, members of the third party. But I must emphasize my concerns about how this program is going to be implemented and



funded. This is an issue of fundamental importance to Ontarians. We need to make sure that we can actually deliver on this promise. Ontarians are depending on us to do the right thing. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Further debate? The leader of the third party.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Thank you, Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise in support of the motion that was brought forward by the member for London—Fanshawe, because it's a motion that speaks fundamentally to an issue that we know is facing so many Ontarians right now in this province. I appreciate the words of the official opposition and the remarks from their health critic because I think it's clear to everybody, regardless of your political stripe, that there is a crisis in the home care system. The very least we should be doing is not simply making claims that we're going to throw more money at the system but that we're actually going to be dedicated and committed to guaranteeing that a senior citizen or a frail person in Ontario who requires home care, and is assessed and gets that commitment, actually receives the care within five days of being assessed.

I find it astounding that I'm not hearing that commitment from the Premier of this province. I find it unbelievable that something so simple and so basic as giving the people that commitment, that guarantee, is somehow tough for the Liberals to do. It somehow offends their senses to be able to make a simple, basic commitment to the people of this province.

You know what? People don't expect all kinds of unachievable things when it comes to the government. What they do expect, though, is for the basic, achievable things that can be done to actually be done. Instead of making that commitment and instead of being there for the people of this province and saying to them, "Yes, we hear. We know that you're having trouble. We hear that there's a problem in the home care system, and we're not just going to make vague promises to throw money at it; we're going to guarantee you that you get the services you need," they're not doing that. The Liberals won't do that. I do not understand, for the life of me, what's so hard about making that kind of commitment.

I can tell you, wherever I go in Ontario, whether it's people like Alba, who was referenced by the member from London—Fanshawe in her speech and who was referenced by me in question period, who say that they are fearful that they will actually be pushing up the daisies before they see a home care system that meets people's needs in this province—that's a pretty sad commentary on the state of home care in Ontario.

You know, the Premier was talking today in question period about all the money they're going to throw at the home care system, but let's face it: The Liberals have been in power for 10 years. They have more than doubled the amount of money that they're throwing into the health care system, but they're throwing it at their friends. They're throwing it at the well-connected. They're throwing it at eHealth, that spent billions of

dollars and got no results. They're throwing it at an air ambulance system that allowed a well-connected Liberal to make off like a bandit in Ontario. That's what they're doing with people's precious health care dollars.

What New Democrats are saying is that we would rather see CEO salaries in hospitals capped so that they're not making seven-figure salaries and reinvest some of that money into providing home care services. We're saying that there's a lot of work that can be done to streamline administration and to standardize procurement policies across the home care sector that would actually save a lot of money and that would be directed to making sure that people get the home care they need.

So, in response to the question of the health care critic for the official opposition, that's how New Democrats would pay for a five-day guarantee for home care services.

Now, I know New Democrats around me in this caucus want to speak to this issue, so I'm going to end by saying it's not a tough thing to do. It's something that needs to be done. The people of this province deserve it. Let's get a five-day home care guarantee for the people of this province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I'm certainly pleased to rise in the House and speak to the motion brought by our colleague from London—Fanshawe. Certainly, I appreciate her sentiments and in fact the sentiments of the New Democratic Party in regard to the need for additional home care. It's something I certainly share.

As a physician, I used to ensure that my patients received home care, whether it was on the acute hospital discharge side or whether it was on the frail elderly, more chronic side of home care. These were the days when, in fact, I used to make house calls, and I would see the progress that my patients made with the appropriate health care that was delivered at that time in the old city of Toronto.

After that, I was in fact in charge of home care, as medical officer of health for York region—this was before CCACs were created. Again, the value of home care became readily apparent to all of us in York region. It's been a well-known situation for so many years.

The balance between the acute hospital discharge side and the frail elderly side is a difficult one to achieve, but it's something that I know our government is absolutely committed to doing. Certainly, our new government does understand Ontario's aging population, which we are facing, and that our fiscal challenges require changes to how we deliver health care.

I was most encouraged by the member from Whitby—Oshawa in her remarks. She's in favour of increasing home care as well, and I certainly hope, when it comes to the budget that her leader is not even going to read, that perhaps she will actually read it and see the very positive steps, and may consider voting in favour. I think that would be most appropriate in a situation such as a minority government.

We know that the status quo is unacceptable, and that we need to transform our health care system to protect universal health care for generations. And so now, in its second year, a key goal of our Action Plan for Health Care is to make sure Ontarians get the right care in the right place at the right time. This goal is reflected through our new government's commitment to shift more services to the community, most notably to help our growing population of seniors. By moving more services into communities, the best quality care can be offered to people, close to home at a lower cost. With the number of Ontarians age 65 and older expected to double over the next 20 years, improving access to home and community care is critical to this process.

We can provide better patient care if we are responsible about it. Not increasing spending on items such as the cost of prescriptions drugs, physician compensation and hospital budgets—all very courageous decisions our budget has made through the last several years—allows us to invest in more care at home.

Now, much has been made of this week's announcement by our government that it will be investing \$260 million more in home and community care in the next year. Of this \$260 million, an estimated \$185 million will go toward home care. This increase in funding will fund home care for approximately 46,000 more seniors. Those are people in their homes who are going to receive the type of care they need, and this is an incredible benefit to all our communities. This will allow us to set a five-day wait time target for patients with complex needs; those who require home care from a nurse or a personal support worker. It will free up hospital beds, reducing pressure on emergency rooms, and it will also create jobs.

This investment by our government will help ensure that seniors receive faster, more responsive care that addresses their distinct needs. It aligns with our Seniors Strategy, which calls for increased access to home care, and is another example of how we are moving forward to implement the key recommendations of Dr. Samir Sinha's report, *Living Longer, Living Well*.

1510

We know that there are people, especially seniors, who need care in their homes in communities across the province. This is important as seniors frequently do not receive the support they require, either at home or in their community. It can result in unnecessary hospitalization or re-hospitalization or even admission into long-term care. My experience is that no matter the size of the community and no matter in what part of the province it's located, there is a need for people to be able to have support in their homes.

One of the most important aspects of this is that they continue to have the opportunities to socialize, to make them feel that they are part of the community, and I'm sure that this kind of social inclusion is what we all want. We want to feel like we're part of a community. With community and home care support, they can live independently and feel confident and connected to their

communities. They can live with dignity at home, close to their family, neighbours and friends. This is why community services such as Meals on Wheels, adult day programs and brain injury services all form a pivotal part of the province's health care system.

Our funding announcement this week is also significant as it acts as a cost-avoidance measure. Investing in community care means that we will spend less in other parts of the system and can see better values for our hard-earned tax dollars. This proposed investment in home and community care continues to build on our government's commitment to improving access to and funding for community care across the province.

My colleague from Ottawa—Orléans detailed the very impressive investments we've made since we were first elected in 2003. We wish to continue this type of investment by providing for home and community care, and improving our health system across Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** As Ontario's population continues to age, it's vital that we keep patients at home for as long as possible. That is where they are happiest and can remain healthiest. The challenge of putting everyone into a home just can't be done. We can't go down that road. We need to ensure that those folks have the care they want at home, and that's what they're telling us. We favour a move toward community care—people out of hospitals and in their own homes. We need to ensure there's a focus on patient-centred, integrated continuing care, and that's the biggest thing we're pushing. We in the PC caucus support these policies. In fact, they're reflected in our white papers, *Patient-Centred Health Care* and *A Healthier Ontario*.

We can no longer afford to increase health spending by 6% to 8% annually. There is not just an unlimited amount of money out there. We have to ensure that we're doing things in an effective way. What we're suggesting in our white papers is to make sure we're using every dollar effectively. We want to have more effective use of dollars, which means more people can be in the homes who actually need to be there, but more can be in their own home getting the care they need.

Generally, we support what this is, but we remain concerned about the funding method. As is many times the case with the NDP, there's lots of the flash words and the 30-second sound bites, but when you ask them for the plan of how they'll truly get to all these numbers, it's just not there. It's just not the case where there's no limit on spending.

In fact, I find it very interesting that they continually bring out these thought processes. They grabbed 15% of insurance just out of the air. There's no fact to that. There's no plan of how to get there.

**Interjection:** There's no money tree.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** There's no money tree; very correct.

I have to suggest that if this government hadn't propped up the no-limit-spending Liberals the last time



and don't continue to prop them up this time as the farm team, maybe we would have some of this change in place already and people in health care truly would be getting what they rightly deserve.

The other thing that I find a bit confusing here—again, it's very interesting; not really, when you think of the Liberals. They've reversed their previous promise to boost spending in home care by 4% annually in favour of a bigger, shinier number—\$185 million, which is \$150 million more than the NDP even asked for, at a time when they ran up a \$12-billion deficit over the last nine years. It boggles my mind. It just tells me that they're trying to buy yet another election. They did it the last time with gas plants. This time they're going to try to appease the NDP by just throwing money at them, but it's their money we do not have.

The last point that I'm going to talk about is the leader of the third party, Andrea Horwath, who wrote a letter to the Premier back on February 6. In that, she talked about this plan and she suggested that they could streamline CEO salaries and also the Ontario local health integration networks and community care access centres. But as recently as the 2011 election, the leader of the third party said she would actually get rid of the LHINs. So is she getting rid of the LHINs or isn't she getting rid of the LHINs? It's all over the map.

We have to have more concrete ideas. We have to ensure at every chance that we're putting patient-centred care, the people at the very forefront. We have to have concrete plans, goals, targets and accountability built into everything. We can't just grab from the money tree and expect everything in the world to be rosy when we're facing a \$12-billion deficit.

Speaker, we're generally supportive. There needs to be lots of work on this bill before we would go the final route, and we'll always put the patients of Ontario first. Home care is one of those needs that we'll defend.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>rs</sup> France Gélinas:** I want to congratulate my colleague from London-Fanshawe for bringing this motion forward. The motion is quite simple: We want a guarantee. We want a guarantee that no matter where you live in Ontario, no matter if you live in a northern or a rural community, you will have equity of access.

I represent a beautiful riding in northern Ontario. I represent 33 little communities, all of them more beautiful one than the other. So when I hear the government talk about a target, you know what I hear, Mr. Speaker? I hear that in big, urban areas, they will get their home care within one or two days, and in northern areas—in the 30 little communities of Nickel Belt—we will be at 262 days. That doesn't work for me. I want every Ontarian to be treated fairly; I want equity of access.

So when my colleague says we will bring a guarantee, this is what she means. She means that people in Nickel Belt will be treated the same way as the people in the other 106 ridings. That means that we will have the same access as everybody else.

When we hear the government talk about targets, it doesn't cut it for me. It doesn't cut it for me at all. When I hear them talking about more physician visits in the home—I mean, I get a bellyache just thinking about it. I would be happy to have physicians, period, never mind having them coming to my home.

I'm happy for the people in downtown Toronto who are able to have those services, and I don't want to take them away from them. But what we're asking, moving forward, is for a little bit of equity. I don't think this is asking for too much.

The amount of money has been clearly identified. It's not going to take services away from anyone. It's going to bring equity of access. We're not that far off. But that little difference makes a big difference for a lot of Ontarians who right now are at the receiving end of the inequity in home care.

When they talk about \$185 million more for home care and 46,000 more seniors, how could you argue about this? I haven't seen the figures or anything. But there's nothing in there that guarantees. The member for London-Fanshawe brings that guarantee, which is why we need to support what she's putting forward.

There are other members of my caucus who want to talk to this, but I will, if you allow me, Mr. Speaker, talk just for a minute about Keith and Cecile, who, on May 10, tied the knot. That was on May 10, 71 years ago. They will be celebrating their 71st anniversary—he's now 92 and she's now 90; they were 19 and 21 years old when they got married—and they will be doing that at my house.

Why am I talking about this? Because they are a prime example of how long it took for them to get home care. The hardship we went through—both of them ended up being hospitalized before we finally were able to get them the little bit of care that they needed.

Had they been living someplace else in this province, chances are they would have gotten home care faster. But they live in northern Ontario. That doesn't take their needs away. They contributed to this province beautifully over the years, and for many, many years. Now they need a little bit of help to stay in their home, and that's called home care.

So I hope that everyone in this House will realize that what we're asking, we're asking so that we have equity across this province. I think this is something that everybody here can relate to.

1520

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm pleased to make comments on this motion from the member from London-Fanshawe. Congratulations on bringing this forward as a ballot item.

I've dealt with CCACs and home care through my business for the past 15 years. Our pharmacy, which is a great pharmacy, delivers home health care products. We set up the beds, we get the orders and we ensure that the home is ready so when the person gets there, all the equipment they need is there for them to convalesce. We

also take care of the medications to ensure that they're correct, and again, that they are there for the patient when they get home.

I do agree that we should have as-equal-as-possible treatment for everybody across the whole province. I'm quite sorry to hear that Nickel Belt does, in fact, have to wait so long to get their home care. In my riding, the South West CCAC wait times are pretty much non-existent; it's pretty quick. But I think it's quite an imbalance that should be remedied, so I do support this motion.

Questions I do have, which I would like—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** We can work together.

Questions I would like to work on are—it's a guarantee that you're proposing, but I would like to know what the consequences are when the guarantee does not occur, when the government does not live up to their side of the action. We've noticed with the gas plants, the Ornge scandal and eHealth that this current government does not believe in consequences for their actions, so I put it to the third party to perhaps elaborate on what occurs when the government fails in their guarantee. There should be consequences to hold them accountable.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Well, that's it; we are getting used to it. The province is getting used to the failure in this part, and we need to hold them to a higher standard. They need to attain that standard to retain the confidence of this House. So we need to understand what the consequences are, Mr. Speaker.

The other point I'd like to bring up that no one ever seems to really talk about anymore is long-term-care homes. That's a huge issue in my riding. I have too many of my families looking for a bed because home care can't take care of them 24 hours a day in their home, but there are no beds for them. Because we have these huge areas, the LHINs find the next available bed, and many of my constituents' family members are sent out of the city, out of the community. These people have to work 9 to 5, five days a week, and maybe on the weekend. When are they going to get the time to actually go visit their mother or father or grandfather who's in another community far away?

Much of the fight in my constituency office is fighting for a spot to fill the beds. My concern is—I know we don't have a lot of money in the government anymore; the government across has wasted it for the last 10 years—that we're not preparing for the long-term-care onslaught that's going to hit us with this baby boom generation, as we get older. We are healthier; we're going to be living for a longer period of time. There are going to be many, many more people living into their 90s and 100s who aren't going to be able to be taken care of in their home, but we still need those spaces to be accessible and available for them.

I feel for the "sandwich generation," as I call them, who have their kids at home or have their kids in university and college and have the trouble of getting their

parents into a rest home or a nursing home because there's no space there. What are they to do? Stop working? Are they to worry and fret? I've had too many cases in my riding alone of that specific occurrence. What happens? They get stuck in our hospital system, taking up the beds. The expenses are going through the roof, when that money could actually either go to a home care program, could go to long-term care, but instead they're stuck in a hospital, which isn't even made to be a nursing home. They need proper care in a long-term-care home, rest home, or to be at home.

I look forward to this motion going through. I'd love for the third party to talk about the consequences when the government does fail, and I'd also like to bring up this discussion of long-term-care home beds, because I think that's an issue that has been ignored for far too long.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Kenora–Rainy River.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Since I was first elected in the fall of 2011, I spent a great deal of time focusing on the health care needs in northwestern Ontario. Through speaking with people at events and private meetings and a series of health care town halls that I hosted with my party's health care critic, Madame Gélinas, last fall, it has become abundantly clear that the needs of the people in the northwest are not being met. Many of the challenges have been created because the government still refuses to recognize that a system that is designed in—and may work for—the south is inadequately designed to meet the challenges of those of us living in the north.

While there are countless challenges facing us in the northwest, one of the most pressing is timely access to home care, which is what today's motion from the member from London–Fanshawe focuses on. It's a priority for us because it is an essential piece of the health care puzzle which yields a positive return for both the patients and the health care system, and because it is one piece of the system that we can fix almost immediately through strategic investments.

Not only is keeping a person healthy and in their home longer good for the overall health of the patient, but it costs the health care system significantly less money than it would to treat a person with non-emergent symptoms in a hospital bed or long-term-care or emergency home. It is a system that, when it's functioning properly, can yield fantastic results for northerners, particularly seniors who may otherwise have to travel in order to receive the important health care services that they deserve.

People living in the north don't have access to the same convenient health care options that people do living in Toronto. Many people, in particular seniors, live in outlying areas where the nearest hospital or emergency room may be half an hour, 45 minutes or even an hour's drive away. They're being prescribed the services, but when it comes down to it, they aren't receiving home care services, and I've heard of this neglect in every single community across my riding.

It's one of the priorities that the vast majority of the people in my riding have identified as their top priority in



the pre-budget surveys that I've sent out across my riding. Waiting six months for services that are needed immediately simply is not acceptable, and fixing the problem requires only a very modest investment which is really just the redistribution of funds on the part of the province.

As my colleague from London—Fanshawe pointed out in her address, economist Don Drummond found that more than \$1 billion in potential health care savings can be found simply by doing a more effective job of managing the system. By improving access to home care, the overall costs of providing many more expensive acute care services will be reduced, resulting in cost savings for the province. These are very simple and achievable steps that can be taken to ensure that no one waits more than five days to access the home care services that they need.

We have identified them; now we're asking the province to implement them.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member from London—Fanshawe: You have two minutes for a reply.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. We talked about the five-day guarantee. I think the reason we talk about that is because it's so important that when people are released from the hospital, they have that home care come to them as quickly as possible so that we don't see their health fail; then they're back in that vicious circle, back into the hospital and taking up a hospital bed when they could have certainly stayed at home if they'd had that guarantee in place.

I ask myself, why are the Liberals so opposed to the guarantee? They talk about a target; why can't they commit to a five-day guarantee?

**Interjection:** Just commit.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, commit. Sign on the dotted line.

Maybe this Liberal government has a problem with accountability. Committing to a five-day guarantee? That means they have to be held accountable to something that they actually commit to. We know that they've had some issues with health care and performance, or lack of performance, and the fact that there has been no accountability for eHealth and Ornge. Now, of course, we're talking about the other issues in my riding, when we look at the underdosing of chemotherapy. It's very sad that we've come to this point, where we have to ask for a guarantee for people to get home care. How ridiculous is that? But we have to do that, because this is what's happening: Seniors are at home, and they're not getting the home care that they need so that they can maintain quality of life.

As the member from Nickel Belt said, when you're married 71 years and you're able to stay home, that couple will want to stay home, and they deserve to have those home care guarantee services; they can live out their golden years in a quality of life—in a healthy way. I don't think it's asking too much to make sure that when people are released from the hospital, they can say, "I'm going to have a visit from a home care worker in five

days so I can keep my health up and not have to be back in the hospital within five days."

1530

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We'll take the vote on this item a little later. Orders of the day.

## REGISTERED HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES PROFESSIONNELLS EN RESSOURCES HUMAINES INSCRITS

Mr. Dhillon moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association / Projet de loi 32, Loi concernant l'Association des professionnels en ressources humaines.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to acknowledge and thank the co-sponsors of this bill, the member from Whitby—Oshawa and the member from Beaches—East York.

As well, I'd like to recognize some members of the Human Resources Professional Association who are here in the House today. Mr. Bill Greenhalgh, CEO—I hope I got that right—and Mr. Scott Allinson. He's the vice-president of public affairs and he's been working, I believe, with all parties with respect to this bill.

As we all know, every Ontarian is touched by work. It gives us dignity and purpose. It sustains our families and it creates wealth and growth for the province. But how happy, satisfied and safe we are in our work depends largely on how organizations implement the various laws that govern the Ontario workplace. An organization that is lax in its application of the Occupational Health and Safety Act jeopardizes the health and well-being of its workers and the bottom line of the business, while an employer that complies with the Employment Standards Act is doing its part to ensure equitable workplaces in Ontario.

As most of you are aware, HRPA regulates the HR profession in Ontario and issues the certified human resources professional designation, the national standard of excellence in human resources management. HRPA is committed to advancing the human resources profession to ensure that HR is a full partner in developing and executing organizational strategy and the creation of equitable workplaces.

The 20,000 members of HRPA work in 8,000 organizations in Ontario that employ more than 2 million Ontario workers in all industries across all sectors of the economy. They are committed to building fair and equitable workplaces for Ontario workers. HR professionals are the bridge between employee and employer to ensure both parties are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the province's workplace rules and regulations.

Since receiving their 1990 act, HRPAs has regulated the HR profession in Ontario by setting standards of practice to protect the public interest. In sum, its regulatory framework seeks to ensure that HR professionals are competent in their work and behave in an ethical manner. HRPAs determines for its members:

- the right to set standards for who may enter the profession;
- the right to set standards of practice for those working in the profession;
- the right to create rules for when and how members may be removed from the profession;
- the power to regulate the practice of members;
- the power to establish a professional liability insurance requirement;
- the power to establish requirements for membership and certification; and, finally,
- the powers to discipline its members.

Mr. Speaker, some have asked what this bill will do for members of the HRPAs. This bill provides HRPAs members the long-sought recognition as true professionals. As business practices, economic conditions, workforce composition and employee expectations all become more complex and interrelated, so have the demands of the professionalism of HRPAs members.

Bill 32 will enable HRPAs to ensure the quality of the HR profession in Ontario, meaning more control over our own destiny as a profession; ability to command a premium in the marketplace; increased ability to influence public policy; increased attractiveness of HR as a career choice; and controlling the use by unauthorized individuals of the CHRP designation.

This bill will provide more regulatory teeth for HRPAs to better protect the public, employers and employees. This is acknowledged when the public becomes aware of the fact that there are trained professionals in the field who follow appropriate standards.

The continuing professional development of HRPAs members provides reassurance that people will be treated fairly and legally by practitioners.

This bill will assist HRPAs and its members to evolve into a strong and credible tier-one profession. Bill 32 will update the existing act to provide checks and balances for the public and members of HRPAs. A few examples would be:

- ensuring that the Statutory Powers Procedures Act, 1990, would protect the rights of members;
- HRPAs would be required to abide by the Fair Registration Practices Code, being sections 2 and 3 of the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006;
- application of the powers is subject to bylaws which must be ratified by the membership.

Another distinction would be that HRPAs's board would include three individuals who are not members of the association or a self-regulated human resources body, and who are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. These board members would, in effect, represent the public interest and would, along with the board's

elected and appointed members, be charged with implementing a regulatory regime that contemplates HRPAs members' certification requirements, the complaints process, the discipline process, and professional standards.

The legislation will also add HRPAs to the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006, as a schedule 1 signatory, which it voluntarily adopted two years ago as testimony to its commitment to transparent, objective, impartial and fair employment treatment and career opportunities for all Ontarians.

I would also like to note that Bill 32 has a lot to offer Ontario businesses. As business practices, economic conditions and workforce demographics, and employee expectations all become more complex, HR professionals are at the centre of this rapid change. HRPAs and its members make significant contributions to the productivity and success of the business community and organizations of all types. HRPAs members possess a high level of professionalism and provide human capital management know-how that creates huge value for the organizations that employ them.

This bill will make sure that as the world of HR is changing, so are the needs of employers to have qualified, professional HR staff to ensure that the organizations are in compliance with government regulations.

The HRPAs sought an independent expert opinion on the bill from Richard Steinecke, a legal expert in the area of professional regulation. Mr. Steinecke believes that there are numerous advantages to modernizing and upgrading the existing HRPAs act. He notes that, in general, the bill "creates a ... professional regulation statute. It addresses many of the gaps found in the current private statute. Overall the provisions are similar to that found in other statutes regulating professions. If anything, the provisions provide greater safeguards for members and give a greater say to members of the HRPAs than other similar statutes." The bill "provides numerous advantages for both members and the public. The proposed statute is consistent with similar statutes. In fact, the bill is more sensitive to the interests of members than similar statutes for most other professions."

The bill has also received strong support from the business community and allied professional groups when it was introduced in the last session, including the Retail Council of Canada, the Canadian Employee Relocation Council and the Certified General Accountants of Ontario, to name a few.

In supporting Bill 32, I believe it will enhance public protection by strengthening the ability of HRPAs to effectively provide the regulatory oversight that it needs to meet the standards of its members and its employers. I feel very strongly that this is a win-win for business and the protection of the public.

Thank you very much.

1540

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** It's a real pleasure both to co-sponsor and to speak to Bill 32 today. As you may be



aware, Mr. Speaker, the Human Resources Professionals Association, or HRPA, has almost 20,000 members in Ontario. I'm proud to say that nearly 1,000 members are from my riding and the surrounding area. Many of them have expressed their support of this bill to me.

I would like to welcome several of the representatives from HRPA who have joined us today in the gallery for this debate. Mr. Bill Greenhalgh and Mr. Scott Allinson, welcome to Queen's Park. It's great to see you both.

A regulated human resources profession is in the interest of employees and also has much to offer Ontario's businesses as well as the public. Human resources professionals are often seen as champions of change as organizations seek to increase their operational effectiveness. The public can place greater confidence in accredited professionals such as those human resources practitioners who hold a certified human resources professional, or CHRP, designation.

The upgraded regulatory powers resulting from Bill 32 would enable HRPA to better protect the public interest from incompetent or unethical human resources practitioners, help prevent abusive corporate positions and, if abuse should occur, provide the public with an effective means by which to seek recourse. Quite simply, Bill 32 is good for the public and good for employers in Ontario.

HRPA members make huge contributions to the success and productivity of the business community and organizations of all types. One specific area where I personally believe that human resources professionals can be of great assistance is with respect to the employment of people with disabilities. Many people with disabilities are currently receiving Ontario disability support payments, not because they want to but because they are simply unable to find employment. Many employers, on the other hand, are reluctant to hire people with disabilities due in large part to a lack of knowledge and associated stigma, particularly in the area of mental health.

This is also an economic challenge. Within the next five to 10 years, Ontario will face a significant shortage of skilled workers, so we need to be able to employ as many people as possible in our labour market and utilize the skills and talents of many people who are currently underutilized—people with disabilities, older workers, aboriginal workers and women, in many cases. Human resources professionals are key to this transformation of our workplace.

Some have said that this bill will be a burden to employers. I would say that that is simply false. Membership in both the HRPA and the CHRP designation is voluntary. Employers always have the choice whether to hire CHRPs for their firms or businesses.

In closing, I would like to say that in the 20 years HRPA has been in existence, the CHRP has been very successful in demonstrating its value. If anything, Bill 32 will increase the value of the CHRP designation. Between HRPA members' commitment to professional excellence, their unique role as a bridge between employers and employees, and their key role in optimizing employ-

ment for businesses, as the member from Brampton West said, I believe Bill 32 is a win-win for everyone, and I would urge all members to support Bill 32.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** It's a distinct pleasure and honour to stand and speak in favour of this bill, Bill 32. It's one that I'm actually quite close to as probably the only human resources professional that sits in this chamber, next to, maybe, John O'Toole, who had a past life in HR.

**Interjection:** Don't forget me.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Okay; now everybody is.

Certainly I think this is long overdue. This is something that human resources professionals have been looking for for some time. I think it's prudent to recognize how much the profession and this job have changed over the years, coming from a time where—at one time it simply was just payroll, the personnel department that hired people, made sure they were on the payroll and all the administrative stuff was taken care of.

It has transformed itself, over the past 10 or 20 years, to a profession that's responsible for the health and safety of the workers in the workplace, labour relations, benefits management. They're privacy custodians—the guardians of all the private information about the employees that work at any given employer—recruitment and payroll management, just to name a few things.

You can see that many of these actual elements of an HR professional's job, if they're not done properly and if they're not done with attention to detail and attention to the law, can actually jeopardize a business very dramatically, to the point where it could actually put them out of business if they're not doing their job properly.

It's critically important, I think, to have a standard in place for human resources professionals to be able to be accredited and be held accountable within their own profession so that they don't do damage to the businesses that they have, and to give businesses the confidence that when they hire someone with a CHRP designation—or a member of HRPA, of which I am a member—they know they're getting good-quality people who have done quality training and have been designated and tested to a very tight standard and are going to be held accountable, not only by their employer and by the people that they work with in their own workplace, but by their own association as well and by their peers. This is a really powerful tool that can be used in any profession. I think it's high time that the profession is recognized as being a critical piece of the structure of any business.

This bill, Bill 32, really enhances public protection in general and makes sure that we have ongoing progressive labour relations and that the health and safety of the workplace is at the highest possible standard we can have, not just in the country but in the world. Ontario is already working towards that. I think this bill really speaks to that.

The member who introduced it certainly covered a lot of the points, I think, that are very, very pertinent to this, and I think I look forward to seeing this through. I really

do hope that this sees the light of day; often, private members' bills don't. This one makes sense. It has been introduced a number of times before and I think it's high time that we actually see this bill through. It should be just a housekeeping issue, and I really do expect that this is something that could actually benefit businesses, the well-being of our employees, health and safety, and standards of employment in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I am very happy to speak to this bill, just briefly. This is the second time that this bill has been introduced. It was introduced a couple of years ago. I brought it forward then as a private member's bill. It has now been brought forward by my colleagues here because I couldn't bring it forward as a cabinet minister, but I did want to speak to it. I think the importance of the bill—and I don't want to get into the details, but just let me say what I think is the overall importance of this bill. Ontario has got real challenges in keeping its high-quality industry here in Ontario, and indeed, all other industry and corporations.

We are also trying very, very hard to attract industry and corporations and businesses from other jurisdictions. One of the things that industry looks for when it considers moving into Ontario is a very, very stable environment in the sense of management and employees, whether they're unionized or not; whether they have a world in which they can work in a very professional way and exchange and debate their needs, whether it's from the union's point of view in communicating to management, whether it's non-unionized employees communicating to management, or management's need to communicate to the unions and to its employees.

One of the things that has made Ontario so attractive is the quality of our human resource professionals here in Ontario. I've travelled out of the province. I've travelled out of the country. I've been on trade missions. One of the things that I've heard is that Ontario has such a stable work environment and that the relationship between management and employees—unionized employees and non-unionized employees—is a model that all other jurisdictions try to emulate.

1550

I think that one of the many reasons we have that context in which we operate here in Ontario is the work of the human resources professionals, as individuals in the companies they work for and in other places where they work, and also as an institution, the Human Resources Professionals Association. They have brought professionalism and competence and a level of confidence in the process that is just outstanding.

We want to build on that. We want to build on that environment, we want to further enhance the environment and we want to recognize the work of human resources professionals and the work they do to create this environment in which companies and employers want to do business and want to have a relationship between employers and employees.

I think the beauty of this bill is that it recognizes the work that human resources professionals have done, and raises the profession to another level of respect in the community and in the province. That's good for Ontario. That's going to help us attract jobs and more jobs.

I want to thank the executive at the HRP: Scott Allinson, who is here—stand up for a second, Scott—and his CEO, Bill Greenhalgh. Bill is here. They have worked tirelessly on this over the years, and I thank them. This is a good piece of legislation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association. As with most other bills we have been debating in the House this year, you can trace this bill back to an early form as 2011's Bill 28. But while the name of the bill is essentially the same, the nuts and bolts have changed somewhat.

One of the changes between the existing act and the proposed act being debated today is that the former is a private act, whereas Bill 32 is being introduced as a public act, which gives it a level of status not offered by the private act.

Among its provisions, the new act offers a framework for membership in the HRP, and prohibits the use of specific designations and initials by unauthorized individuals and entities. It outlines protocols for complaint resolutions against members, sets up a disciplinary practice, authorizes inspection, and provides for the appointment of inspectors and investigators. Bill 32 enhances public protection by ensuring that accredited professionals are trained to follow appropriate standards and offer public protection from unprofessional conduct. Bill 32 would apply only to members of the HRP, not all human resource professionals.

These are important steps, and this bill addresses many of the gaps in the current private statute. The fact that this would be a public act signals to all in the province that the government of Ontario understands the importance of the human resources professional to our society. It is essential and often thankless work, so we owe it to them to take this seriously. It's not often that we're reminded of the key role these professionals play in companies, but it is important that we as legislators focus our efforts on making sure they are treated with the appropriate levels of respect, and also be aware that their work impacts the public in profound ways. We must be mindful of that.

That said, this legislation is not perfect. There are some details that need work, which both the Human Resources Professionals Association and some of my colleagues have flagged. I'm hopeful that these details can be ironed out at committee, and that the legislation can be made more substantial, so that all of us can feel good about speaking to its merits at third reading.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It is again my privilege and honour to stand and speak to this bill, as I have on past



occasions. I want, first of all, to applaud the people who keep coming back here with the patience of Job. You come back here with a bill, you see it debated and you see the Legislature prorogued for elections. You come back again, you debate a bill, you see the Legislature prorogued for four months and your bill dies. You come back again, you present your bill, and you see it being debated once more.

To Bill Greenhalgh and Scott Allinson, I have nothing but the highest respect for how you have kept your sense of humour through all of this. Never once have I seen you get angry or wonder about the wisdom of this place that takes so long to do something that I think all members in this House will agree with. I will be very surprised if there's anyone who votes against this today. I think everyone will vote for it just to send it to committee and to ensure that the bill eventually gets enacted.

I want to say that this is a bill whose time has long since come. The people in the HRPAs who put this forward understood this when they brought the bill forward a couple of years ago. They understood that the original bill, setting up the designation and allowing them to work as human resources professionals was 20 years old; it was outdated. A lot of things have changed in that time, and we need to change with it, as does their organization.

Labour in Ontario has undergone a profound change in the last 20 years; probably more profound change than in all of Ontario's history since Confederation. In the last 20 years, what have we witnessed here in terms of people working and job expectations? We've seen technology that has replaced whole levels of governance inside most industries and most commercial ventures. We've seen people coming here with foreign credentials who want to use them and have to be evaluated, and we need professionals to look after that.

We've seen a preponderance of part-time work, which was unheard of even a generation ago and is now the new norm, where people are working reduced hours for reduced amounts of pay, and how that has to work through government legislation and contracts to figure out where they fit into the system and how much they're entitled to. We've seen guest workers coming—there are now 300,000 guest workers in Canada, many of them here in Ontario—who are here from other lands for a very finite period of time, and who are expected to work, sometimes train Canadians and then leave. We have the whole incidence of pay equity, which although it began more than 20 years ago, still grinds on and on and on.

People from the HRPAs need to understand that we have unionization. And although there was unionization before, unionization today is different. It's not confined to an individual factory or workplace. It is now unionization of people across industries. I'm thinking here about hotel workers and others who unionize under one union but work in multiple locations with multiple contracts and working conditions.

We have the whole issue of people working with disabilities. Although people who had disabilities were in the workforce before, there is more understanding today

among more enlightened employers about how they have to accommodate people with disabilities. Certainly they look to the HRPAs to help accomplish that.

Last, but not least—there are probably more that I'm forgetting—is the whole legislation around workplace harassment, which, although it has existed since people first started going to work, is now looked upon in a very different light. We require professionals to determine what harassment is, and we require professionals to make sure it is stamped out in each and every place where people go to do their work.

It was my honour, a few months ago, to present a group of people with Queen's Jubilee Medals. I presented all of my medals to people who live in Beaches-East York except one, who was not able to attend on the night—it was here in this august place, the Legislature. People came here, and I presented their medals. One could not come. I was asked to come and present it, and I didn't know at the time we were giving him the medal that he was a member of the HRPAs. I didn't know that.

He asked, through my office, if we could present the medal to him at the annual association meeting. He wanted to receive the medal in front of his peers. You can imagine that I was delighted to do that. He got the medal for his work on organ donations and organ transplants and his work with the Canadian Liver Foundation—tremendous work.

#### 1600

I wasn't aware he was an HRPAs member, but when I found out, I was delighted to go there. I went there to present the medal to what I thought would be a couple dozen people at their annual meeting and went down to the hall to present it. I have to tell you I was taken aback. There were thousands and thousands of people in that room. I had no idea of the size of it, I had no idea how they had drawn people from all over North America to attend it, that in fact Ontario has the second-largest HRPAs convention in all of North America—it takes place yearly—or that they were there to do many things, to learn many things.

After I presented the medal, I talked to the people in HRPAs, the people in the room, those who were from Ontario, about this organization and what they were trying to do. To a person, they were supportive. There was nobody who was opposed. There was no one who thought this was the wrong way to go. There was nobody who had any constructive criticism, even. They were united in the fact that they believe that the designation that they were going to get, the CRHP—and the organization was going to do everything necessary to highlight the kind of work they did and to give it strength. Those thousands of people, if not the two gentlemen here today, convinced me overwhelmingly of the necessity of passing this bill.

The bill needs to be passed. What are going to be the benefits of the bill? The bill needs to be passed because we have done the same thing for other groups. We have done the same thing for engineers. We have done or are attempting to do the same thing for denturists, for people

in the medical health profession. We have done the same thing in part for lawyers, although they have their own body, the Law Society of Upper Canada. We have done it for every professional group that seeks to have a designation and a bill like this.

There's a reason they all want the bill; there's a reason, and that is because it will give them the authority and the moral suasion out there in the public so that people will know that they are professionals and they can self-regulate. We look to these self-regulated professionals in many cases as a sign that you know when you go there you are going to get honest and good treatment.

If people don't belong to the self-regulated body, you have to question and ask yourself, "Why don't they belong to that body? Do they not have the credentials? Do they not pay? Is there something wrong? Are there cases against them?" All kinds of questions would come to your mind.

I want to tell you that one of the things I have read about and I admire about HRPA is that in the last couple of years, complaints on HR professionals have come in to the Ministry of Labour, but not one of the complaints that has come in has been of an HRPA member. They are complaints about people who are not members, who have not met the standard. They have no complaints against their membership because they are (a) able to train them better, and (b) able to police them and advise them when they are taking the wrong steps—and those members have someone to ask professional questions of.

They need to have one professional body, and this will grant it. They need the ability to advise and enforce a code of conduct, so that if anybody steps outside of those bounds, they can be disciplined or removed and their status as an HRPA member can be taken away. They need that in order to make sure that people have confidence in those they are hiring and putting in those jobs.

They need the ability to discipline those errant members, to take away their livelihood in some cases if they are not acting appropriately. They need to be transparent and fair to their members, but more importantly to the public at large. That's why I was pleased to see in this bill that there will be three additional members put on the board who are not HRPA members, who are there to protect the general public and to make sure that the public's interest is at all times maintained.

They need the designation of CHRP. They need to be able to put those initials after their names. Just as many professions are able to put the initials after their names only when they belong to the accredited association, this needs to happen as well. It's all right for someone to say, "I'm an HR person. Never went to school, never took any courses, never did all the things that most HR professionals have done, but I'm going to call myself an HR person anyway." Well, there's nothing in here that's going to stop them from doing that, but I will tell you, any company that wants to hire an HR person should make sure that they have the initials CHRP behind their names.

I welcome this group, and again, I started out by saying I applaud your patience. I ask you for your

patience again. Because this bill, as all bills, is here for second reading, I am relatively confident we're going to do the right thing today. Then we're going to send it to committee. My good friend from Mississauga will stand up at the appropriate time once it has received the support of this House and send it to a committee.

Once it gets to committee, of course, it's up to the government House leader to negotiate to actually have the bill brought forward. It will not have the same weight as a government bill, so please choose the committee wisely. Then, after it's finished in committee, the day or two of hearings—and I'm sure that's all it will need—it will come back to this House, if the government agrees, for third reading. It will then have to be sent to the Lieutenant Governor to be signed into law and finally proclaimed.

That is a long process. It need not be that long. We are in this maelstrom right now of leading up to a potential election. I am asking the government members especially: Give some swift passage to this bill. Make sure it passes. Make sure it doesn't die with another prorogation for election. These people have waited long enough, and they deserve their own independent and good association.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 32. Let me first thank the members of the three parties that have brought this forward in a co-sponsored fashion. I think it's the sort of conduct that people in Ontario expect from a minority government, and I think they like it when they see us trying to work together.

I don't think I'd be telling anyone something they don't know if I explained that Ontario businesses that compete in the global economy today are in the midst of a great change. Business practices, economic conditions, demographics, labour law—everything is becoming more complex and more interrelated, and the profession we rely on in the business world and from a government perspective to deal with that rapid change and to offer us the best advice they can are those men and women in Ontario who are engaged in the human resources business.

Many of the professionals that are engaged in that have chosen to belong to the HRPA. I understand that province-wide, they have about 20,000 people that have signed up on a voluntary basis, and I was a little surprised to find out that about 8% of all the human resource professionals in Ontario actually live in my own riding, in Oakville. That was interesting to hear because I didn't know that before I got some more information on this organization.

I think any association, any profession that achieves the ability to self-regulate, when it receives that level of confidence from its government, proves to the people involved in that government that it has reached a stage of maturity and that it's able to conduct itself in a way that's in the best interests of the society they live in, the people they represent and the employers they work for, and they each play an interrelated role in that.



The rules that the HRP A is seeking, I think, are the ability to regulate in the area of competence; in the area of the legal requirements they need to bring to the job; dignity in the workplace, for example; balancing various interests between employer and employee when it comes to labour law and when it comes to workplace health and safety perhaps; and confidentiality in the workplace. Privacy plays a very important role and has a much higher profile as an issue than it had in the past, whether individuals from time to time may find themselves in a position where they should be declaring a conflict of interest, where something they're asked to do as a professional is in direct competition with their own personal interest. Also, I think when these types of organizations receive the respect that they are accorded, they are also able to foster that professional growth amongst their own members.

I think that over the past year, or certainly since I've been associated with this issue, the HRP A has proven over and over again that it meets all those criteria; that it's got the ability, it's got the competence, to be able to move ahead with its own members. It's asking us today to allow them to move forward. It's asking us today to transfer to them the powers that they've been seeking for some time. I think the transfer of those powers is in the best interests of the province of Ontario; certainly it's in the best interests of the business community. It's obviously in the best interests of the HRP A itself as an organization, and in the people that it represents.

1610

The way that they bring value to the business world, Speaker, is they're able to identify trends in the workplace, to forecast changes that are coming in the workplace that allow us to have a competitive advantage over other jurisdictions where human resources professionals may not be as adept as the ones we find here in the province of Ontario.

So I think they're able to provide information to businesses in the province of Ontario that allow those businesses to make smart decisions, allow us to keep a little bit ahead of the curve and allow us to keep the Ontario economy a little bit ahead of the curve.

We've given these types of powers to the Law Society of Upper Canada, to the doctors' college, to the teachers' college, to the College of Trades, accountants—so I think it's about time that we also transfer these powers to the human resources professionals in the province of Ontario.

I'll be supporting this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to rise and speak today to Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association. Now this bill doesn't reinvent the wheel on this issue, so to speak, but in this instance it is a good thing, Mr. Speaker.

This bill would effectively update the Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario Act of 1990, which is, in fact, a private act. While this may sound like

a very minor change to those at home, it's actually a very significant step.

The private act was a good start, and it has served its purpose well, but the reality is that over 20 years have passed since this act came into effect. Times have changed and legislation must change with them. This updated bill is one that is needed and is relatively straightforward. As a public act, it demonstrates the will of the Legislature and sends a signal to the human resources professionals across the province that they are being taken seriously.

The HRP A describes its role as regulator of the industry, stating, "Through the establishment of standards or requirements for registration with and certification by HRP A; the assessment of the qualifications of individuals against established standards or requirements for registration with and certification by HRP A, and the official recognition that an individual has met established standards or requirements for registration with and certification by HRP A."

Now, given the importance of HR professionals, it is absolutely critical that they receive certification and oversight. They have a great responsibility to both employers and employees, and hold confidential information right in their hands. From personal financial information to individuals experiencing substance addiction or complicated workplace disputes, human resources professionals are stewards of some of the most complex and personal aspects of any company.

But HR professionals do much more than oversee personal information. They're often regarded as drivers of change in business, as the most successful companies look to innovators in the field of human resources to boost worker productivity and job satisfaction—as a matter of fact, just as I did as an HR professional working in the private sector with a company of over 5,000 employees, both union and non-union.

There would be many gaps in the existing bill that would be plugged if this legislation is in fact enacted. Given the importance of the job, we must ensure proper oversight is there. As a public act, the bill signals that the government recognizes the importance of the profession to society as a whole and in fact, offering the status and recognition not given to a private act. The bill strengthens the ability of the HRP A to hold members to certain professional standards to meet the demands of its members and businesses right here in Ontario. We need to reward professionals that are doing quality work across the province by ensuring that their peers adhere to certain codes of ethics which will keep the designation respected.

I want to clarify some of the concerns that human resource professionals across the province may have. Some have mentioned that by entrenching the HRP A, it will provide additional costs to employees. To that, I would remind those concerned that membership in the Human Resources Professionals Association is entirely voluntary.

Since 1990, the association has regulated the industry by granting the Certified Human Resources Professional,

the CHRP—or, as I call it, the “chirp”—designation. Just like professional designations in other industries, CHRP allows those with the distinction to command higher salaries and gives them a good return on their modest investment.

I applaud the Human Resources Professionals Association, as well as the members from Whitby–Oshawa, Brampton West, and Beaches–East York for their collaborative approach to this bill. I'll look forward to the swift passage of this bill so that it will be enacted without delay.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** It is a pleasure to stand up on this private member's bill introduced not merely by my colleague but by my friend, the member from Brampton West, who has in the past introduced some groundbreaking legislation to deal with the regulation of temp agencies. He's the latest member to come forward with this bill, which deals with a series of measures to enable human resources professionals to regulate the affairs of their own profession.

There is a teachable body of knowledge required to become a human resources professional. When we think of the things that we ask human resources professionals to do in our companies, whether it be looking after the collective agreement in a unionized environment or dealing with people's training plans or resolving delicate personal issues, we're conferring on our HR people a fairly large measure of responsibility and, in many cases, authority.

What I think this bill does is, it proposes a regulatory framework which would be pretty much what you would expect to find if you were to go to work as a professional engineer or as a chartered accountant or as a CGA or as a medical professional or a dentist. That's what this bill really focuses on. I think this is at least the third time that I can recall debating this particular bill. I think at this point, it's about time to make our decision again, to move it to committee. In committee, if there's fine tuning needed, that's when we can come forward and talk about what other measures may be necessary, give anybody that maybe would like to have input their chance to talk about the bill, and bring it back here to the House to see whether there's any fine tuning finished at third reading. Perhaps this time when the bill has been introduced, let's pass it, enact it and grant to the human resources profession those same rights, privileges and responsibilities that we grant to every other type of profession in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

The member for Brampton West, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** First of all, I'd like to thank the members from Beaches–East York, Whitby–Oshawa, Barrie, Willowdale, Burlington, Oakville, Mississauga–Streetsville, Chatham–Kent–Essex, and, in particular, I want to give an extra bit of thanks to the member from

Willowdale, who I know has introduced this bill a couple of times in the past. I know that there have been hiccups along the way.

I also want to thank the folks from HRP who are here with us today: Mr. Bill Greenhalgh, CEO; and Scott Allinson, who's the VP of public affairs.

Speaker, we're blessed in Ontario to have one of the greatest climates for someone to come here to work. That's because we have certain laws and regulations that make Ontario a big magnet for people—highly skilled professionals, who have options other than Ontario—to come here to Ontario.

That's because we have the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Employment Standards Act. These acts, from time to time, change, either through legislation or regulation, so it's important that we fill in the gaps that are missing in the human resources act, which is what this bill intends to do, and give human resources professionals the level of status that doctors, lawyers and accountants have. Human resources is a very complicated subject, so we want to make sure that the people who practice in the human resource area are educated and have the proper training to effectively enforce the rules and regulations of Ontario.

I look forward to dealing with this bill in committee. To sum it up, this bill is good for the economy, it's good for employees and it's good for business.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

## POOLED REGISTERED PENSION PLANS ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES RÉGIMES DE PENSION AGRÉÉS COLLECTIFS

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will deal first with ballot item number 19, standing in the name of Mrs. Munro.

Mrs. Munro has moved second reading of Bill 50. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a bunch of noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll take the vote at the end of regular business.

## HOME CARE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Ms. Armstrong has moved private member's notice of motion number 19. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? The motion is carried.

*Motion agreed to.*



REGISTERED HUMAN RESOURCES  
PROFESSIONALS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LES PROFESSIONNELS  
EN RESSOURCES HUMAINES INSCRITS

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Dhillon has moved second reading of Bill 32, An Act respecting the Human Resources Professionals Association. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? The motion carries.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Brampton West?

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I'd like to refer this bill to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Agreed? Agreed.

Call in the members. There will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1623 to 1628.*

POOLED REGISTERED  
PENSION PLANS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LES RÉGIMES  
DE PENSION AGRÉES COLLECTIFS

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mrs. Munro has moved second reading of Bill 50. All those in favour please rise and remain standing.

**Ayes**

Albanese, Laura  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Barrett, Toby  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Chan, Michael  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Clark, Steve  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Elliott, Christine  
Fedeli, Victor  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Hardeman, Ernie

Harris, Michael  
Hudak, Tim  
Jackson, Rod  
Jaczek, Helena  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Jones, Sylvia  
Klees, Frank  
Kwinter, Monte  
Leal, Jeff  
MacCharles, Tracy  
MacLaren, Jack  
MacLeod, Lisa  
Mangat, Amrit  
Matthews, Deborah  
McDonnell, Jim  
McKenna, Jane  
McNaughton, Monte  
McNeely, Phil  
Miller, Norman  
Milloy, John  
Moridi, Reza

Munro, Julia  
Murray, Glen R.  
Nicholls, Rick  
O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Qadri, Shafiq  
Sandals, Liz  
Scott, Laurie  
Sergio, Mario  
Shurman, Peter  
Takhari, Harinder S.  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Wong, Soo  
Yakabuski, John  
Yurek, Jeff  
Zimmer, David

**Nays**

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Bisson, Gilles  
Campbell, Sarah  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Fife, Catherine  
Forster, Cindy

Horwath, Andrea  
Mantha, Michael  
Marchese, Rosario  
Miller, Paul  
Natyshak, Taras  
Prue, Michael

Schein, Jonah  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Vanthoff, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 61; the nays are 17.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mrs. Munro.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** The Legislative Assembly committee.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested it be referred to the Legislative Assembly committee. Agreed? Agreed.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

NON-PROFIT HOUSING  
CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW  
AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS  
EN CE QUI CONCERNE  
LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT  
SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 24, 2013, on the motion for second reading of Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 14, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** As I stated in my remarks last week on the Local Food Act, here we go again. Just as Yogi Berra said, it's déjà vu all over again. The McGuinty-Wynne government has brought forward yet another bill that we have already debated. Bill 14, the non-profit housing co-operatives act, is before—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order, please.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I understand that this bill has been in the works since 2007. That's six years. I'm hopeful that the Liberals are finally going to be able to deliver on their pledge now that it is 2013.

The previous Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, now the Premier, introduced this last year. However, it fell victim to Dalton McGuinty's prorogation. It should already be law, but it is not. We are looking forward to having this bill go to committee to see how it could be made better, to find ways to improve it. There are many people in Perth-Wellington, and indeed all across Ontario, who are waiting for affordable housing.

Co-operative housing fulfills an important need in our province. Co-operatives are a very important part—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Can I ask members to take your discussions outside?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Co-operatives are a very important part of our housing supply in Ontario. Bill 14 has the general support of all three caucuses and it is time that we moved forward.

About a year ago, I had the opportunity to meet with representatives from housing co-ops in my riding. I spoke with Doris Johnson, who is a board member on the Bard of Avon Housing Co-operative. Mike Voogt, manager of Festival City Co-operative Homes, was also at the meeting. So was Harvey Cooper, manager of government relations for the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada in their Ontario regional office. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with them to discuss important issues for people in Perth–Wellington who live in co-operative housing.

There are five co-ops in Perth–Wellington, supplying 196 units. There are also housing co-operatives in Harriston and Palmerston which are owned by the county of Wellington. The Ontario PC caucus knows that co-ops have an important role in our housing mix in Ontario. They provide good affordable housing options for my constituents.

We agree that the Landlord and Tenant Board dispute resolution process needs to be streamlined. The current system costs co-op members a million dollars in unnecessary legal costs every year. But the costs do not end there. The broken dispute resolution system also clogs up our courts. This costs all Ontarians time and money.

Again, Bill 65, which was supported by all three parties but died on the order paper when the member for Ottawa South prorogued this House, did a lot to fix the system. Bill 65 started to tackle the backlog. However, in the new housing co-op bill, Bill 14, we found a surprise. It was something that the Co-operative Housing Federation never mentioned as an issue in the previous legislation. Bill 14 proposes to give the Landlord and Tenant Board the power to waive the \$45 filing fee for low-income tenants.

As my colleague the member from Leeds–Grenville, our very capable municipal affairs and housing critic, has said, there seems to be no rhyme or reason for this change. It seems to be a matter of playing politics. Many feel that waiving the filing fee and introducing a new process will lead to increased complaints to the Landlord and Tenant Board. However, we already have a backlog. This just doesn't make sense, Speaker. The system is going to suffer from further delays and the process will be even more bogged down. Some worry that there may be more nuisance applications from both sides being put forward.

We need a system that works. I understand that \$45 is a significant cost for some applicants, and I'm sympathetic to that. I understand that this money can be used for food, for clothing and for hydro bills—hydro bills which are spiraling out of control under this government's watch. However, the effect that waiving that fee has is that there would be increased applications to the

Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board. This will only cause further delays, and this causes further costs for those involved.

My understanding is that typically the \$45 filing fee is returned to the tenant if they are successful at the Landlord and Tenant Board, so why is the minister making this change? Why is she suddenly waiving the fee? Again, it's all about politics.

I'd like to take a moment to reflect on what it meant when Bill 65 died on the order paper, along with every other piece of legislation that was before this House—over 100 pieces of legislation, I might add. In the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada's newsletter in the fall of 2012, here's what it said:

"After very promising progress and building excitement, Bill 65 died on the order paper, along with all other legislation, when the Premier resigned and prorogued the Legislature. The bill would have brought in the long-awaited changes to the eviction system for Ontario housing co-ops."

The CHF newsletter went on to say, "When the Premier made his announcement on October 15, the bill was in the middle of second reading debate, which was expected to wrap up later that week. This would have marked an important milestone and brought the legislation close to final approval.

"This is incredibly disappointing news for us, especially when the government had given our legislation priority and it was moving forward," says Harvey Cooper, manager of government relations for CHF Canada's Ontario region. "The only good news in this is that the minister and opposition housing critics still support the legislation as good public policy and have vowed to do their best to bring it back whenever the Legislature reconvenes," said Cooper."

Clearly, the Co-operative Housing Federation was disappointed when this Legislature prorogued, just as we in the Ontario PC caucus were.

When there was support for Bill 65, why then has the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing now introduced an amended bill and this out-of-the-blue surprise amendment? I support the concept that there should be a more expedited way of resolving disputes. We all know that when matters go through the courts, it often takes years before issues are resolved. When you are dealing with evictions or other issues that co-operative housing organizations have to deal with, they need to be dealt with in a more timely fashion.

**1640**

As I mentioned earlier, there's also the issue of cost. It takes a lot of money to go to court. For residents in Stratford who live in Banbury Cross, the Bard of Avon and the Festival City Co-operative, we need a bill that addresses their concerns. For Little Falls Co-operative Homes and Stonetown Co-operative Homes in St. Marys—they are also expecting that their concerns are addressed.

In conclusion, we generally support this new bill. However, there are some amendments that we would like



to see in committee. We need to deal with this issue and get it to committee as soon as possible, and we need to have discussion in committee and move it forward quickly.

This is a bill, like I said before, that has support of all three parties. Unfortunately, when the Legislature was prorogued last fall, we lost a lot of time. This bill should have been through, it should have been done, and here we are debating it again.

I hope that things can go quickly with this bill as we do support it, and we need to get it to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I'm going to speak for about 10 seconds because I want to see this bill go to committee. It's been talked to death in here. Our good friends have come back enough times over the years. Let's just get moving on this. I would advise and hope that my colleagues across the aisle do the same, and actually even to the right of me, figuratively and literally. We hope that they only speak for 10 seconds, too.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Eglinton—Lawrence.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Let's get on with helping people in co-operative housing. Let's get on with the work—

**Interjection:** Stop the filibuster—

**Mr. Mike Colle:** —and stop the filibuster, Tories. Let's get on with the work of the people.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I do respect the comments from my colleague.

With respect to this bill, I think what we're looking for is some respect for process here in terms of my right—

**Interjections.**

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, no. Let's put things in context here. I think it's important. This has been here three times. If the government had a real desire to bring a conclusion to this thing, they could invoke a closure motion which would force this thing to the end of debate and then to committee.

I put to you that it's more politics—with all due respect, it's more of the politics in terms of the tools that we see in question period, dealing with committees that are charged with resolving the gas plant issue. It is tied to this bill. This bill is now hung up in a situation where I believe we would be supportive of this bill in the longer term.

What we're asking the government to do is really to come forward with some of the information on two of the things, including the gas plants, including the Ornge helicopter issues and—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'd ask the member to keep his comments to the previous speaker.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** That's why—the members are saying things that aren't helpful in terms of helping our visitors here understand how they've been caught in the vice of the sheer politics of it all.

This has been here three times. Why is it still here? You're the government, and you're a minority government now after the recent election. All I'm saying—I'm trying to put some clarity, Mr. Speaker, to this. I will be speaking on it, as other members in our caucus want to express their concerns and also recognize—I want to put on the record here the members who are here. I have just met Diane Miles; Judy Shaw; Dale Reagan, who's been here for all of the debate; and Harvey Cooper. I respect the fact that they are caught in this vortex that I say is the politics of this place on this issue. The government runs the business; they have the tools to make it change.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Very briefly on the member from Perth—Wellington: He said things three things that I'd like to repeat because they're absolutely what we should be doing. He said, "Here we go again," "Let's get on with it," and "Let's send this to committee." I agree wholeheartedly with him. Let's do all of those three things right now.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Perth—Wellington, you've got two minutes.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I agree, and I thank all those who spoke to my comments, even though some were very short, and that's understandable.

This bill should have been passed. It should have been done. However, the government side chose to take four months out of the year and have a leadership convention. So don't sit over there and blame us for this, because it's not our fault.

**Interjection.**

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** You guys shut this Legislature down. That's what happened. Over 100 pieces of legislation died when you did that, sir.

Mr. Speaker, I won't say much more than what I said before. We need to get this done. Let's get it to committee and let's get this bill passed.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Even after being here in this assembly for more than 22 years, I still consider it an immense privilege to rise in this House and offer my remarks in response to the provincial government's proposed legislation.

All of us in this House have been entrusted by our constituents to represent them in this place, to give voice to their values and beliefs and to bring forward their hopes and aspirations as well as worries and concern. In opposition, it is our role to point out the flaws and drawbacks of the government's proposals, because you can be sure of one thing: The government will not talk about the downside of what it's doing, nor will they speak for the people whose interests are being negatively affected.

I want to talk about co-op housing and Bill 14, but I need to place this debate in context. It's clear to me that some on the government side don't understand the role of the opposition in our parliamentary democracy. The

Liberal government plans to introduce its budget on May 2, we are told. In recent years, provincial budgets have been presented in this House in late March, roughly coinciding with the end of the fiscal year and the beginning of new one on the 1st of April. This year's budget is more than a month late when compared to recent years. Given the fact that the government leaked to the media that their budget would be sometime in April, they're coming in late according to their own timetable.

Our leader, Tim Hudak, has said that it's unlikely that he will support the budget unless the government does a 180-degree reversal of its tax-and-spend approach, its policy of doubling the debt over a period of 10 years or so, and its excessive red tape and regulations. In response, the government criticizes us, suggesting we've made up our minds before even reading the budget. They say we should consider voting for their budget.

But I want to ask them this: When in Ontario's history has any leader of the official opposition voted in favour of a government's budget motion? I certainly can't recall it happening here in the last 22 years—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Perhaps the member from St. Catharines recalls it, but I'm not sure. He'd have to tell us.

I don't recall Bob Nixon, Murray Elston, Jim Bradley, Lyn McLeod or Dalton McGuinty—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I hope the member is going to tie this all into the bill that's in front of us.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** —the Liberal opposition leaders with whom I've served, ever voting for a government's budget.

Why is this? The answer is simple: Opposition parties oppose. They don't normally prop up the government. You can't expect an opposition party to compromise its principles just because the government lacks a majority and would like to hang onto power a little longer. We await the budget speech on May 2 and debate on the budget motion that follows and the vote that will determine whether or not the government survives or has to resign because it lacks the confidence of the House.

We are here today debating Bill 14. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, in her remarks on this bill, explained that co-op housing is something like 40 years old in Ontario. She said that there are something like 550 non-profit housing co-ops providing affordable housing for 44,000 households. They estimate that 125,000 Ontarians call a co-op unit their home. Think of the population of Guelph, Cambridge or Barrie, and round it off a bit. That's the number of people who live in co-op housing. The minister described four characteristics that define co-op housing. They are, she said, affordability, governance, security of tenure and community.

Bill 14 is a proposal to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, and the Co-operative Corporations Act to move most co-op tenure dispute cases from the court system to the Landlord and Tenant Board. These

disputes might include rent arrears, late payment of rent, wilful damage, illegal activity, or interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of their property. The cost of hearing and resolving these disputes in the courts is currently estimated to be as much as \$5,000 each. The hope of this bill is that the Landlord and Tenant Board will be able to hear these disputes and resolve them more fairly, quickly and at a lower cost for all concerned.

However, has the government really thought this through? Can the Landlord and Tenant Board handle these additional cases? We hear that this important adjudicative body is already backlogged. Does this mean that the settling of all landlord and tenant disputes will be further delayed? If the government says not, are they planning on increasing the resources, both human and financial, for the Landlord and Tenant Board? Where is the money coming from for that?

1650

Here's what our Ontario PC caucus is saying. We supported this bill when it was introduced last year. However, the bill died on the order paper when the House was prorogued on October 15. If they hadn't shut down the House, in all likelihood, this bill would be law by now. As such, this delay has likely cost co-op members hundreds of thousands of dollars in court costs, as the old rules have remained in place during the interval. This is where the Liberal government has put its own interests ahead of the interests of tenants in co-op housing.

We're concerned that this bill contains an unnecessary amendment that may open the floodgates to nuisance applications to the Landlord and Tenant Board, swamping a system that's already backlogged, further hampering the board's ability to hear cases in a timely manner. So, we ask, is this bill going to solve one problem and, in the process, make another problem worse? That is the key question here, and it's the one that the government hasn't answered, but must.

Our Ontario PC critic for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the member for Leeds–Grenville, does a super job in this House, and he is a superb representative of his constituents. He gave our party's leadoff speech in response to this bill on March 4. That day being a Monday, I was in the chair all afternoon, and I recall his speech as being outstanding. The member for Leeds–Grenville spoke for an hour, giving a comprehensive and thoughtful critique of the government's housing policies. He pulled no punches, but he was also constructive, as a good critic should always be.

He noted that a bill such as Bill 14 has been talked about since 2007. It's something the government has promised for the past six years. The Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, the group asking for this legislation, has been patient, but it's a good thing that nobody's been holding their breath. They had been co-operative in every sense of the word, and hopefully this time, the co-operative approach will pay off.

The member for Leeds–Grenville rightly pointed out that, had the government not prorogued the House, this bill most likely would be law by now, and that by pro-



roguing the House as they did on October 15, dimming the lights in this Legislature and in the process dimming democracy in Ontario, 100 bills died on the order paper at their various stages and, if they were to be revived, would have to be reintroduced and started again from scratch. He questioned whether or not the government is sincere when it says it wants to work with the opposition, and he provided examples which seemed to confirm that the government's seeming efforts to reach out are, in fact, really a smokescreen hiding their true cynical intent.

He pointed out that Bill 14's provision to empower the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive the \$45 filing fee for certain tenants has the potential to create huge problems. He cited a report prepared by the Federation of Rental-housing Providers in Ontario which demonstrated how frivolous complaints will plug up the system and are extremely and unnecessarily costly for landlords. Ultimately, this hurts tenants as well, because the rent they pay is their landlord's revenue and, one way or another, in due course, the landlord's expenses will eventually be reflected in the rent that tenants pay.

He spoke about the meagre briefing he received on the bill, which is unfortunate, and again makes us question the government's rhetoric about wanting to co-operate with the opposition. He spoke about the landlords and the tenants he's met in his attempts to reach out around the province and, implicitly, the need for the government to find a fair balance between their needs and their interests.

He concluded his hour-long speech with a suggestion that he might ask for unanimous consent to speak for an additional half-hour. While he'd given a fine speech, I have to admit I was glad the House didn't grant him those additional 30 minutes. We look forward to hearing his comments at third reading, assuming the bill makes it out of committee before the writ is dropped.

On the subject of affordable housing, I should remind the House of the outstanding leadership shown by the county of Wellington. Almost three years ago, in June 2010, I was pleased to attend the official grand opening of Fergusson Place, on Gordon Street in Fergus. Fergusson Place is a 55-unit building on the north edge of town. It was built with a \$5.7-million contribution in municipal capital funding, a smaller, but still significant, contribution of \$3.8 million from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program and, obviously, a significant contribution from the province of Ontario, which we appreciate. I'm pleased to report that Fergusson Place has become a great success, and the families who call it home have benefited from the county of Wellington's initiative and leadership, and the partnership with the other orders of government. I know that the county of Wellington is very interested in pursuing new affordable housing projects, should the opportunity arise, in partnership and with the financial support of the national and provincial governments.

Likewise, the region of Halton has shown outstanding leadership when it comes to the issue of affordable housing. This week, I spoke with regional chair Gary Carr, and we discussed this. Regional council recently adopted a resolution on the report they had received from

the Halton housing advisory committee. The committee has done a great deal of research on the issue and identified a number of recommendations to address the affordable and assisted housing needs in Halton.

Mr. Speaker, I see my time is up, so I'll yield the floor. I look forward to the questions and comments of other members.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I want to say that we respect the comments made by the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. We respect the fact that there's some disagreement with certain aspects of the bill, and the best way to respect him and his caucus and to respect the housing co-operative people who want to get this dealt with is to send it to committee right away.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I'm pleased always to hear the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. I concur with my colleague from the NDP. We've had some 12 hours of debate; it's time Bill 14 was sent to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** My colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills, I believe, summarized very succinctly the dilemma that we find ourselves in today, as well as the litany of reasons why this bill isn't already in a committee or dealing with the regulations and implementation. I say that because he has served here for 20-plus years, and he has heard this issue and how important it is, I'm sure, in his riding of Wellington-Halton Hills. He has listened to people who find the dispute resolution mechanisms that are in place today unimpressive.

These changes are needed, and I think the government, as he said before, has the tools to move this to the committee stage. That's what the public and viewers today, and those listening from the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, who have diligently shepherded this bill—with the minister here as well today; she knows very well that she does have the tools, although they're rather sharp-edged tools, to relinquish the right to speak.

When you say the word "parliamentarian," it's a French word which means "to speak"—"parler"; "parler français." What we're doing is representing issues beyond just the content of Bill 14. We're actually representing the right to speak, the right to hear and the right to listen to responses from the minister, whether it's finance or whether it's energy or whether it's health care, and get a reasonable response or at least information about why they can't make the decision we would prefer. It's not to leave the impression that we're just being obstructionist. You could make the argument that they are being just as obstructionist in the fact of not using the appropriate tools—House leaders working co-operatively to move stuff through the legislative process in a minority government.

I support the—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm happy once again to welcome Harvey Cooper and his crew here back to Queen's Park again. Harvey, we love you, but we really don't want to see you here any longer. That means that we're really hoping that we can push this on to committee, making sure that we're getting this bill enacted to help out the people of this province in getting the co-op work completed.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Wellington–Halton Hills, you've got two minutes.

**Mr. Ted Arnett:** I want to thank the members for their comments and questions and observations, and I was certainly glad to have the opportunity to speak to this bill this afternoon.

I was referring to the affordable housing needs in the region of Halton, and I wanted to tell the House that after I got this letter from the regional chair, in response, I wrote the Minister of Finance on Tuesday, copying the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I wrote that the region of Halton would like to move ahead, but they need the co-operation and support of the provincial government.

1700

We await the provincial budget. We look forward to learning of the government's commitment to housing, if there is one. We look forward to the debate on the budget and the vote that will follow. While no one knows what the outcome will be, we know this: The Ontario PC caucus stands ready and prepared to assume the responsibility of government again; to restore this province to its rightful place as a leader in Confederation; to strengthen our economy so that our province becomes a magnet for investment and the creation of the new jobs that we need; to ensure that quality health care is accessible for those who need it; that our schools are centres of learning, idealism and inspiration; that taxpayers' money is managed prudently, not flagrantly wasted; and that government is truthful and forthcoming, not sneaky and evasive.

This is the promise of the future with the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario, and we look forward to putting our plans to the people for their consideration.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** I'd like to thank the member from Wellington–Halton Hills for your clarity for Harvey Cooper. I would also like to say that you are a mentor and an inspiration when you speak, so thank you so much.

It is my pleasure to rise today to join the ongoing discussion around Bill 14, an act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act. This legislation was originally rolled out during the last session. Then, as now, this legislation's intention is to bring greater efficiency, accessibility and transparency to the co-op dispute resolution process, a process that can be painfully convoluted. Then, as now, our caucus has

supported this kind of legislation in spirit and intent. But concept is not to be confused with content, Mr. Speaker.

Housing is a basic need, and Ontario's residents deserve a safe, healthy, affordable place to call home. One of the conditions for making that possible is restoring some balance to the dispute resolution process. As anyone who has experienced it can attest, the process for terminating occupancy agreements for co-ops is complex, costly and time-consuming for non-profit housing providers and their members. Yet successful dispute resolution is absolutely essential to ensure the continued success of co-operative housing. Anything less betrays the idea that is installed right there in the name of this residential model.

It is the duty of all of us in this House to do everything we can to foster fairness in that system, to promote the cause of reason and to encourage a clear and effective process. We need to work to ensure that co-ops are able to resolve disputes in a way that is respectful, that cools conflict and that lays the foundation for a space of civility and dignity, Mr. Speaker. These are things that we can often take for granted but which only ever come about as the result of a society that is willing to work to defend those qualities and conditions.

There are a number of them. This province has roughly 550 not-for-profit housing co-ops, which provide affordable housing for 44,000 households containing some 125,000 Ontarians. Obviously, that gives all of us in this Legislature a chance to do a lot of good with legislation like this. That seems to be the intent here, Speaker.

Bill 14 aims to streamline and rationalize the current system of solving problems and disputes, and efficiency and balance in that regard are to be applauded. The evidence suggests that there is often a significant cost in going to court to resolve many of the points of friction surrounding co-operative housing.

The Ontario PC Party has long been supportive of the idea of taking co-operative housing disputes from the court system and putting them into the jurisdiction of the Landlord and Tenant Board. It's long overdue that the minister would act on this initiative by making a very straightforward amendment to the Residential Tenancies Act. We think that's a step worth taking, and we're pleased to see that this legislation is coming from a familiar headspace.

Bill 14 would allow co-op boards to apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board to resolve those tenant disputes currently provided for under the Residential Tenancies Act. That would shift approximately 300 co-op housing dispute cases in all, Mr. Speaker. It is a sensible thing to do. This is, after all, where other housing disputes are settled. As others have rightly stated, it is certainly the decent thing to do. The current way of doing things creates needless ill will. We can do better. Bill 14 would allow disputes to be settled through a mediator, which is a more economical and efficient process.

We on this side of the House do have some concerns that consultations with landlords, tenants and advocacy groups around co-operative housing have been somewhat



limited. Others may disagree, and they are free to do so, but we would like to see broader and more substantial consultation on this legislation before it returns for third reading.

Again, there is no disagreement on the spirit of this bill. All of us recognize that this is an opportunity to do something good to make people's lives better in a real way, and that is always a satisfying way of concluding our work in this Legislature. It is important, however, that we do so in a way that does the most good and makes the most sense for landlords, for tenants and for the system as a whole.

As with other landlord and tenant disputes, the proposed provisions in Bill 14 are the same that all other landlords in this province have, and which are fair, to evict a tenant. These provisions might include rent arrears, late payments of rent, wilful damage, illegal activity, and similar transgressions that negatively impact the landlord and other tenants.

The new provisions in Bill 14 would also streamline the resolutions process by allowing co-ops to appeal directly to the board to terminate a former member's occupancy of a member unit and evict under a few straightforward circumstances. Such conditions might include, for example, where the former member has terminated his or her membership and occupancy rights; where the former member's membership and occupancy rights have expired as of a predetermined date; and where the former member is a post-secondary student living in a student housing co-operative and has given notice of termination.

These are things that currently require the parties concerned to go to court and spend a considerable amount of time and money. The legislation before us would reduce the load of these cases and ease the burden on our court system, which is costly and which saps the limited resources of an overburdened system.

Bill 14 also addresses the legal costs that can be incurred by co-op members. The average cost of resolving co-op disputes in court is between \$3,000 and \$5,000 per case. From the point of view of a Legislature where we see millions evaporate in the blink of an eye—or worse, without blinking—that might not seem like much, but it's money being wasted that would be better put towards the housing system.

So far, so good, and yet the government has seen fit to modify the previous legislation, which of course had all-party support during the last session. It has included an amendment clause that gives the Landlord and Tenant Board the power to waive a \$45 filing fee from low-income tenants. As far as we have been able to tell, there were no stakeholders or associations advocating for this very specific change, so it concerns us to see this amendment put forward without any consultation. The costs of this amendment are unknown. In briefings, the ministry was unable to identify who might qualify to have the fee waived—what the criteria or cut-off point would be.

That's the real liability here. The government has essentially opened up a Pandora's Box, where anyone

with a grievance now has a tool in their tool box. They are creating a scenario where disgruntled landlords or tenants would now have legal recourse to drag every dispute to the Landlord and Tenant Board for an additional challenge, introducing a new source of drag and delay in a system that is already bogged down.

We know that the system as it stands costs co-op members a million dollars in unnecessary legal costs every year, so it's not a stretch to imagine a new scenario that would cost them a million dollars but also clog up the court system, at an untold cost in time and money to all Ontarians. That's probably not the intention, but it's certainly a consequence of the kind of back-of-napkin thinking we're used to seeing from the party opposite.

We all appreciate that the current dispute resolution process can be frustrating for everyone involved, that it is excessively long and costly, comes with emotional wear and tear, and ultimately compromises quality of life, so I'm at a loss as to why there would be a spontaneous modification to the previous legislation that takes us out of the swamp and into another area. Of course, making one spontaneous change begs the question why we're not being more ambitious or practical in making changes that really need to be made or that would make things even more workable.

1710

Having said that, I'm confident that we can address these sorts of concerns at committee. I'm generally supportive of this legislation, and I look forward to the ongoing discussion around it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I think if you looked up “filibuster” in the dictionary, you'd find this debate this afternoon. Again, we support this. We want to send it to committee. In the meantime, if you open the Toronto Star today you'd see there are tenants in this province who have no rent control. We have a government that has been sitting on its hands for 10 years now while people's rents are going up by as much as \$500 today. Let's pass this. Let's get this through. Let's debate something real that will actually support tenants to be able to afford their rent in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'm pleased to respond to what was said. Bill 14, Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, second reading debate continues. Let's get it passed so that these people can go out and provide the social housing, the low-cost housing, the good housing we want in this province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm trying to be patient here, and I listened very attentively to the member from Burlington. I thank her for her preparation to make reasoned observations about the bill itself, Bill 14, and some of the comments she made, similar to those made by the member from Wellington-Halton Hills.

The intent on our side, certainly, is to get this to committee. I do think it's important to recognize that most bills will be improved in committee. There are some frailties. If I'm lucky this afternoon, I will get a chance to speak for longer than two minutes. I was hoping I'd have an hour, because there's that much to say on this bill. I've listened to members in the gallery. Harvey has talked to me, as well as Diane and Judy and Dale. They live with it. They want to improve it, and we want to improve it.

The bill has had three attempts. It's still not the law. We could talk about prorogation—imagine, we were all laid off for four months. Imagine, if you were living in a co-op and a four-month dispute went on and on, how frustrated the tenants would be. We feel like frustrated tenants. This is a co-op, so to speak. It's a co-op where there are people who have the keys to the vault; that's Kathleen Wynne. They've spent all the money; that's Dalton McGuinty. I would say the NDP are kind-hearted people; there's no question about that. And we just want it to be done fairly and professionally. That's exactly what I hear.

Our leader Tim Hudak talks about fairness almost every day in caucus. This is what's missing here. It's missing in this bill. It's missing in Bill 36, the agriculture bill. I have no confidence in the government that this will get done.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened to the member, and she talked about Pandora's Box. I am reminded that when Pandora opened the box, all the evils entered into the world, save and except hope. The box was closed in time so that hope was preserved. I hope we get on with this debate and send this to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Burlington, you have two minutes.

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Thank you, Speaker. I'd like to commend the member from Leeds–Grenville for taking such an active interest in this issue around co-operative housing since taking on the portfolio of municipal affairs and housing critic for the opposition party. I say that as someone who has enormous respect for the passion and knowledge that is visible to all of us here in this House, and I say that from personal experience.

In November, while the Legislature was prorogued, the member for Leeds–Grenville, along with the member for Nipissing, was good enough to spend a day in my riding, touring Stoa Co-operative Homes. Harvey Cooper, the managers and staff were great hosts, as were the residents. I know that the member for Leeds–Grenville has expressed his gratitude for the hospitality and openness of everyone at Stoa. I would also like to offer my thanks, once again, to them for being so generous with their time that day.

Too often we forget, but I think it's important to be reminded on a regular basis that the work we do here should not be the product of silos. It's far better when our policies are shaped by fieldwork and community and stakeholder input, and I think that's certainly the case for

Bill 14. Although I am, for the most part, supportive of this bill, there are still some details that need to be worked out. I hope that we can deal with these at committee, and I look forward to continuing this debate in the House.

I would also like to say, continuing on from the member from Durham, that the government has the tool—it's called time allocation—which would limit the debate and send it to committee, which we would support.

Thank you so much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** It's a distinct pleasure and privilege to stand up today and practise my right as an elected member of this assembly to debate a bill. I find it kind of appalling that some of the members here are actually alluding to the fact that this is a filibuster or that we are dragging this out. You know what? I was elected to come here and speak and represent my residents, my constituents in Barrie, on every bill that comes through here, if I so choose. And you know what? I so choose to represent the people of Barrie. I absolutely am interested in speaking in favour of this bill here today, and I want to tell everyone here and all the people in Barrie why. I think it's appalling that anyone would suggest that we rush anything through in this House.

Speaking to Bill 14, regarding non-profit housing co-operatives, I actually had the pleasure of serving as a director on the Barrie Non-Profit Housing Corp. as a councillor in the city of Barrie, and I know very well the needs different communities have, especially in Barrie. There are thousands of underprivileged people in the city of Barrie, thousands of families in the city of Barrie, who are being underserved because they can't find an affordable place to live. I know many of them personally. We need to do better at this, and we need to do whatever we can to entice landlords to be able to get into the business, entice even local governments like Barrie who are involved in trying to create more co-op housing opportunities in different communities. This bill does go a little bit of the way in trying to do that, helping our most vulnerable citizens and those in need. We need to improve the process for resolving disputes between landlords and tenants. It's a good goal, and it's one that we support. However, this bill is far from perfect, for reasons that I will go into in just a little bit.

I'll start by recognizing that the bill gets a number of issues right. You know, even a blind squirrel finds the odd nut here and there. Generally speaking, we support this bill, as I mentioned, and we support the primary issues it attempts to address.

This bill proposes to move many disputes out of our already bogged-down court system and into the jurisdiction of the Landlord and Tenant Board. I have heard of so many tenants and landlords alike that actually want their disputes resolved. Some are actually in a case where they need to resolve their disputes in a faster manner because it matters to their business, it matters to the fact



that they may even lose a property that they own as landlords, or they may be evicted from a place as a tenant. We need to somehow streamline this, and putting the jurisdiction of these in the Landlord and Tenant Board could be a good idea, if the resources are there when that bottleneck is created there as well.

It is an important change. There are as many as 300 cases a year that are stuck being resolved through the courts. The cases are costly to everyone involved. They are costly to the tenants, who often can't afford it; it puts them more in debt and worsens their situation. They are costly to landlords, who have usually made quite an investment in their properties, both in capital investment and operating expenses, and need it to be resolved quickly and efficiently. And to the province—I mean, through the system itself and through hiring of judges and our whole system, and bogging it down with things that really aren't a priority.

Tenants in co-ops are out up to \$1 million a year in fees for these court cases. These are tenants who are most positively served by low-income housing or co-op housing. Additionally, there's the cost to the province—on average between \$3,000 and \$5,000 per case to resolve. Do the math: That's \$5,000 times 300. That's some big money that can be taken care of here, and that's hopefully what this bill looks to resolve.

1720

The Landlord and Tenant Board is the right place for cases to go. When this bill was introduced as Bill 65 last year, we absolutely supported it. It saves money for the province, it saves money for tenants and landlords and it helps ease the backlog that has been plaguing our court system. Taking action to resolve important issues, after all, is not something that this government does very often, so I think we need to celebrate it when the effort is made.

For example, in 2008, the Auditor General highlighted the growing number of cases backlogged in Ontario courts, growing by 17% in just five years. The same Liberal government sitting across from me today then committed to a four-year plan to cut the number of appearances and days in court required in certain cases by 30%. At the end of their big four-year push, they had only reduced it by 6%—not exactly an overachievement—completely failing to even come close to their own targets. Maybe that's why they're reticent to give themselves targets, especially on the Local Food Act. This bill will not solve our overloaded court system with the relatively small number of cases a year it will help, but it's a good start.

Even this bill has had a number of false starts happen to it. Our critic for municipal affairs, the terrific member from Leeds–Grenville, has been very involved in this issue. He has pointed out multiple times that when Bill 65 was before us in the fall, it had a great deal of support from all sides, in fact. It was therefore unfortunate that this McGuinty–Wynne government couldn't get the job done and pass the bill that was a no-brainer to many, including us. Instead, they prorogued the Legislature, and

it died on the order paper along with many other good bills, like my own bill, which had support from members of all different parties and many across the province.

It's important to point this out: This government ran from its duty and commitment to Ontarians. They had work to do; instead, they ran away under the weight of their own scandals. Their prorogation has cost tenants, landlords and the province millions more. This is an issue that could have been resolved, but instead was kicked down the line by this Liberal government.

Some parts of this bill—and I do mean only some; not all—do bring positive benefits to Ontario, and we support that fully. There are other parts of this bill, however, that raise some questions. As our critic pointed out, there has been an addition to this bill. This is not the same bill that had generated so much support in the fall. There's a new provision to create a system to waive the \$45 filing fee for low-income tenants; with this new provision, the Liberals may have turned a win-win into a lose-lose.

This amendment, which goes against the spirit of co-operation we had just last fall, could result in a much larger number of applications from both landlords and tenants, thus creating more of the bottleneck that we're actually trying to resolve in the first place. It's kind of counterintuitive. In a February 2011 report, the Federation of Rental-housing Providers noted that it currently takes up to 90 days on average for a dispute to be resolved. This new addition to the bill, by increasing the possibility for numerous applications, may see the average of 90 days actually skyrocket.

Just like that, this Liberal government may have recreated the problem they were trying to solve in the first place. It's a recurring theme, I think. They may bring relief to one system while burdening another, with no discernible benefits to all involved. Let's be clear: This will harm everyone involved. It could see an increase in the number of unjustified applications to landlords, and that, in turn, would only increase the wait times for those tenants that have legitimate issues that need to be addressed in good time. It's a provision that hurts all sides.

This is a system that should be efficient in dealing with all reasonable disputes, both by landlords and tenants alike. This addition to the bill may make that more difficult to accomplish, and that's my fear. The addition of this clause makes me think that the ministry has not conducted the same level of consultations and stakeholder engagement that the member from Leeds–Grenville actually has. The inclusion of a clause that could only be described as a lose-lose provision makes it clear that they have not done their research in full. That is why, in support of making this the best possible bill for landlords and tenants both, we need to have province-wide hearings.

We had a bill, Bill 65, that would have clearly benefited everyone. This government has taken a step backwards with this new amendment, I believe. In 2006, this government proclaimed to have undertaken an unprecedented level of consultation. I wonder what they've

been doing since then. Consultations with people whom this will affect must be an ongoing, continuing process. Our job is to serve Ontarians. That does not mean hearing them out once and forgetting about them for seven years after that.

We must have province-wide hearings. The minister should speak to many of the great co-op landlords in the province. Ninety of our 107 ridings have co-ops; they span the province, and so should the consultations. There are 550 co-ops in Ontario, and this bill will affect 125,000 Ontarians. It's clear that the province-wide hearings must be conducted, so that this government can hear directly from those that are most affected by the effects of this bill.

As my time comes to a close here, I want to be clear: There are the makings of a really good bill here, one that one can support wholeheartedly. The bill that preceded this one did an effective job of providing solutions to the problems. It's unfortunate this Liberal government decided to make a good thing worse by adding an unnecessary amendment without considering the consequences of that amendment.

That is why, in support of this bill and in support of the people of Ontario, we would like to see more extensive consultations and hearings. For a government that has often avoided responsibility and accountability, it might be too much to ask for an explanation of the reason for this amendment, yet Ontarians surely deserve one.

We support much of this bill. With further hearings and consultations, we're sure that the minister will realize the error she has made and we can make this legislation even better.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Liberals proroguing: Yes, that kicked the bill down the hill for a few months. But the Tories aren't helping by continuing to speak to it. Two wrongs don't make a right, my gran always said. So let's get this to committee. Let's do it soon. Let's do it fast. Let's get out of here. It's a beautiful day, I hear.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I concur wholeheartedly with my colleague from Parkdale-High Park. It is time to get this very excellent Bill 14 to committee. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I want to compliment the member for Barrie for a fine speech that he gave this afternoon. I think, again, it shows the House how a member of the opposition does his job well. The fact is, when we debate these issues in the Legislature, we are doing our job as members of provincial Parliament, privileged to be here representing our constituents. Yes, there are times when people would like the process to move more quickly, and certainly normally we would like to see bills that are in the public interest proceed through the process in a

reasonable way. But I think it's important, and the member pointed out, I think, that the fact is the Liberal government prorogued the House starting October 15. The House was prorogued for four months and four days. Of course, had the House not been prorogued, many of the bills, some 100 bills that were on the order paper, would have proceeded in the legislative process as you would expect they would have, at least leading up to a reasonable session probably terminating sometime before Christmas. So for the government now to be pointing the finger at the opposition and suggesting that we're holding things up is a bit hard to take, given the fact that they prorogued the House for four months and four days, and I would add that.

But, again, I think the member for Barrie touched on one of the key points in this piece of legislation that members should consider, and of course that is the fact that the bill was introduced before and that there has been this new provision added to the bill that seems to come from nowhere, allowing the Landlord and Tenant Board the opportunity to not charge the \$45 filing fee for disputes. We're concerned that this may very well lead to a lot of frivolous complaints that will tie up and further backlog the system. As I said earlier in my remarks, to the extent that the system is backlogged, that means everybody's concerns and everybody's issues are not going to be dealt with in an expeditious manner.

So I think the member for Barrie has brought forward some very important points in this debate. I'm glad that he had the chance to speak, and I'm looking forward to his two-minute replay.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Trinity-Spadina, questions and comments.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** It's very clear from hearing all the speeches made by the Conservative members that they want to punish the Liberal Party. I understand that, but the people you are really punishing are the non-profit housing co-operative people who are waiting to get this done. I hear what you are all doing, and I hear what you are saying, member from Barrie, but the best way to respect them is to send it to committee as quickly as possible. You've punished the Liberals, perhaps not enough, but this is not the way to do it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. The member for Barrie, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Again, I'll say that I'm really kind of appalled that everybody hasn't taken the opportunity to speak to this bill. We came here to do a job. We came here to discuss things; we came here to debate things; we came here to discuss the merits and the detriments of different bills. So to actually not support speaking to this—and I know it's a nice day; I know everyone wants to go home and ride their bikes and do whatever you do. But the fact is, we're here to do a job, we were elected to do a job, and we're going to damned well stand here and do it. I'm not going to apologize for taking every ounce of the time that I have to represent the people of Barrie and the people of Ontario in actually speaking to this bill in a meaningful way.



There are elements of this bill that we cannot support. There are elements of this bill that I think need to be fixed, and they need to be addressed. Each one of us who has spoken has talked about different elements of this bill that need to be addressed, which I think shows the value of actually standing up here today and doing our jobs. I know none of us want to do it—and I'm not sure why we're the only party that's actually willing to do what we've been sent here to do, which is to represent the people who elected us to be here.

1730

But you know what? I'm not going to apologize for it. I'm proud to stand up and talk about how we need to help people who are landlords, who are tenants, who have been stuck in the system. They've been backed up, backlogged in the system. It's costing them money, it's costing them time and it's costing them their health in many cases. This bill actually has amendments in it that have changed from the last time it was introduced, that are counterintuitive. They go back and actually do damage to the original purpose of the bill.

This needs to be addressed. They're not willing to do it because they want to go home on a Thursday; that's really what it boils down to. It boils down to people not wanting to talk about a bill, to talk about the merits and the faults of this bill.

Anyone who wants a good bill should be willing to stand and speak to it.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Durham on a point of order.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Earlier today in the session, I was commenting, and I should correct the record. I mentioned that the member was from Timmins-Cochrane; it should have been Timiskaming-Cochrane, and I'd like to correct my record.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've been waiting anxiously to address this. I'm pleased that the minister is here. I say that out of respect. She must realize that there are some things that could be done to improve this bill. So out of respect for her presence here, I put that on the record—but it doesn't get any better than that.

I do say this: I do want to put on the record as well that in attendance we have, as I mentioned before, but in my formal remarks, members of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada here—patiently. They include Harvey Cooper as well as Dale Reagan, Diane Miles and Judy Shaw. Thank you very much for being here. I think they deserve a round of applause from all members on this Thursday afternoon.

I also want to put on the record very clearly that I do meet and have met with, over my roughly 18 years here—plus the several years I had on municipal council prior to coming here. Borelia co-operative housing in Port Perry has 70 units. From time to time, I hear from people on various sides of the discussion. As well, I hear

from Bowmanville Valley Co-operative Homes with 68 units—but not a large amount of time.

Actually, for the record, many of the members have used pretty much boilerplate commentary. I'm going to stick to something quite refreshing. I've actually read most of the bill, and I think it has some genuine surprises for members who haven't taken the time to read it. I would say that when you look at it, it does give the co-operative association some brand new, hefty tools. They're probably needed to resolve some of these unsolvable disputes.

I'm going to look at the act itself, for the indulgence of the members: "Most of the amendments are for the purpose of creating a procedure in the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 for non-profit housing co-operatives to regain possession"—important—"of a member unit occupied by a person after his or her membership and occupancy rights in the co-operative terminate or expire." It's very important to realize that their rights will be terminated under some dispute mechanism.

"Currently, non-profit housing co-operatives can regain possession of a member unit only by obtaining a writ of possession from the Superior Court of Justice." In other words, they've got to go to court—and that's the issue in a nutshell. It's the most important issue. That means that the tenant, to defend their rights, needs to spend \$5,000 or \$10,000 on a lawyer and, I suspect, wait, and have anxiety for groups that may not be high up the food chain to start with—I hope that's not too blunt—but people who have had challenges in their lives in some respect.

Also, it goes on: "Termination of occupancy and eviction of former members from member units of non-profit housing co-operatives"—and the amendments are quite specific. It says, "The key amendment is the addition of part V.1 to the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006. The new part sets out the circumstances under which a non-profit housing co-operative may apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board (the Board) for an order terminating a former member's occupancy of a member unit and evicting the former member. These provisions parallel provisions in part V of the Residential Tenancies Act...." There's the legal language around what this really does. It's important for the record to put that out there.

I know our member from Leeds-Grenville, the critic, has done a formidable job in representing our concerns in parts of the bill. This is why we would support the bill and the intent to remove it out of the costly dispute resolution process into a process more founded in trying to find mediated solutions—that, to me, is really an important first step. Whether it's in any legal matter, finding a non-court procedure would probably benefit everyone. I can think of cases that are currently—when I look at some of the things going on here as an example, this all relates to this, the rights of persons being expunged of rights.

I look at, for instance, the Ornge board that was appointed. Somehow, they know nothing now of things that

were happening that they should have known things about. The fiduciary duties are clear in law on the board of directors' pecuniary interests as well as their rights and responsibilities. That's similar to this in a much smaller arena. They were making millions of dollars, and it's all covered up—that's perhaps too strong of a word—hidden from the public who are actually paying for it.

I see much of the same thing happening in a number of areas. When you look at the gas plants, for instance, clearly the Premier has said it was a political decision—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I hope you're going to bring this around to the bill in front of you.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** This does relate to co-op housing. It's the issue of rights and responsibilities. This bill goes quite a ways to resolving disputes being resolved in courts.

Gosh, at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would seek unanimous consent because I've hardly gotten to section 7. Could I seek unanimous consent for more time?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member is requesting unanimous consent? Agreed?

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** There are lots of noes. Carry on.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I heard a yes, one yes.

Anyway, there are other provisions under the amendments to the Co-operative Corporations Act itself. There are changes there as well. I would encourage members to—I also volunteer to sit on the committee that this will be referred to to make sure we get it right. I think experience has been a teacher.

I do read the mail we get. I think some members haven't read much about this. They're using these photocopied notes.

This one letter I received is quite challenging; I may need more time. I would like to finish the letter. It could be nothing more than four or five minutes. Here it is. It was sent to all members on March 5, 2013. It says:

"Dear sir or madam,

"I encourage you and other members of the Ontario Legislature to support further amendments to Bill 14"—further amendments, okay?—"Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013)." I'm going to make sure the minister gets a copy of this; it may not all get on the record.

The letter goes on, "It would be irresponsible for any MPP to fast-track this proposed legislation into law." They don't want it rushed through. Are you listening? "The proposed legislation removes the requirement of a duty of procedural fairness in consideration of the merits of the case 'that the court system offers residents of' co-operatives today.

"In my view, co-op housing member residents that have housing charge disputes or serious maintenance complaint issues require the protections and benefits of the Landlord and Tenant Board ('LTB') and access to mediation services under the residential"—that's the point the bill tries to resolve, access to mediation.

It goes on to say, "Co-op member residents require an adjudicator in the LTB that may ensure decisions related to housing charges, maintenance issues and evictions are procedurally fair, done objectively and impartially without prejudice." So there's some perceived prejudice in the system, it says here.

"In my view, co-ops have associative difficulties, attributable to poor or bad management. Interpersonal skills, multicultural prejudices and challenges, collusion, abuses of power, cliques, and favouritism can present huge problems with reforming co-op tenure disputes. Board of directors, members, and staff can be seen as not being objective, fair and impartial.

1740

"In my opinion, trying to resolve disputes at co-ops internally will result in sanctions that may include evictions for some member residents that should never occur.

"Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation ('CMHC') has operating agreements with many federal program non-profit housing co-operatives located in Ontario.

"In my view, there are some 263 co-ops that may represent an estimated 20,000 households that may represent an estimated 55,000 people in Ontario that would have either rent-geared-to-income or market rent housing charges calculated at co-ops."

It goes on: "Compliance monitoring of the operating agreement between CMHC and co-ops is expensive, not done in detail, and many records that may document the co-ops' management are not monitored. If the co-op breaches the operating agreement then obtaining a court order can be expensive to force the co-op to comply with the operating agreement (specific performance).

"Although co-ops may be encouraged to comply with the operating agreement, compliance of the operating agreement is seldom enforced by CMHC in relation to resident housing charge calculations and co-ops not in good repair. (Please note the Agency for Co-operative Housing Annual Portfolio Performance Review: 2011 Reports to CMHC.)"

I actually do need more time—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Because we're trying to move this debate along, I wrote a small poem for our friends in the gallery. It's a haiku. It goes like this:

Please pass this bill now.

Let's send it to committee.

Tenants need our help.

Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** The member from Durham delivered a very elegant speech this afternoon, but I just heard from the Leta Brownscombe co-op and the Sunshine co-op in Peterborough. They want this bill to be given a green light now. Let's get it passed, Mr. Speaker.



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for Barrie.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this again.

The member from Durham is always interesting to listen to and always has some good input into the debate. I'm not sure why the other parties are so reticent to discuss this—if there's something that's being hidden or there's something that they don't want known. I'm not sure why. I've never known any Legislature, be it a city council or a federal or a provincial Parliament, to actually encourage stifling debate on anything. Any time we get an opportunity to speak to anything and an opportunity to represent our constituents is a bonus.

This is an important bill. This is one that is critically important to many—I can't tell you how many landlords and tenants come through my office in Barrie and talk about the problems that they have with the system getting clogged up, bogging them down, costing them money, time and, in many cases, their health through stress. To actually say that spending an extra hour or two debating this thing is going to make any big difference in the scheme of things is completely inappropriate for this place. We were sent here to do a job. To not want to do the job and to sit there and huff and puff and talk about all the other reasons why we shouldn't talk about it—I just don't understand it. I don't understand the premise of it.

We have a job to do here, and this job is to make sure this bill can be the best bill it possibly can be and to make sure that we are clear about that. What my riding wants, what the people of Barrie want, are more co-op housing opportunities. We have, like I said, thousands of families that are struggling and looking for co-op housing opportunities. And if they get them, they actually have to go to other places in Simcoe county to get them. We need to entice more landlords to do more to create more co-op housing. This bill doesn't quite get the job done.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Just to comment back to the previous member, we have been debating this bill for hours, for weeks, for months. For years this bill has been going on. It has been exhausted. It's time to move it on to committee so we can make sure that we get the best bill possible.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Durham, you have two minutes.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** They've cut—I lost my time. I have two minutes. Thank you very much.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Unanimous consent to give you one minute.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No. I would actually ask members to be more patient. Reflect on our elected duties here: to represent our constituents and the voices on both sides of the table. It's very critical that we're always listening.

I could say that the member from Wellington—Halton Hills made the most important commentary today about

the political dilemma we find ourselves in. I'm very impressed; I'll say that. We've got the government House leader here; the Minister of the Environment; the Minister of Municipal Affairs; the Minister of Transportation; the Minister of Innovation, who's looking for jobs, trying to create jobs; the Minister of Government Services; and the minister of the Olympics—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Tourism, yes; tourism and culture.

But my point in the arguments I was trying to make to represent my constituents—my constituents have said to me to represent them in fairness and in integrity. They're trying to say that we are not effectively contributing to the debate. We've made it clear that the politics—the government has the tools to resolve this impasse now, and they're refusing to do that for their own reasons. But they're also refusing to agree with our House leaders, Mr. Wilson as well as the member from Leeds—Grenville. If they could resolve this dispute, this and other bills would move to committee.

The committees now are charged with solving the issue with the gas plants, resolving the issue with Ornge, and soon to have the budget. There's so much going on here that this bill is going to be sidetracked, I'm completely convinced.

For the members sitting here, I have little faith in this government—honest to God. Please track them, because they have the tools. They're not using the tools effectively. They can't any longer govern this province. In my opinion, they have lost the confidence—and we're going to deal with that vote of confidence on Monday or Tuesday of next week, because that's what we have to talk about.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** On a point of order, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I just want to express my appreciation to our legislative pages, who have served this Legislature so well over the past number of weeks. They have done a super job, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure many of them would have wanted to have the opportunity to probably distribute the budgets. Unfortunately, they're not going to have that, but we do very much appreciate the good work that our pages—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):**—point of order.

Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to rise at this time and make some response to Bill 14 on the co-ops. The first thing that I want to say is that I have two housing co-ops in my riding. I've always been very pleased and impressed with the opportunities that they've provided for the residents, being invited to things like Girls Inc., which many of you would know is one of the organizations that was set up a few years ago to be able to

provide girls with a sense of their own importance and self-esteem. The group that meets in the one co-op has certainly done an admirable job in providing this kind of service for the community.

The co-ops in my riding have many opportunities for young people to be able to have recreational opportunities and things like that. I think it speaks to the bigger picture of the importance of that kind of housing and that kind of housing being made available.

I always have thought that the model of the co-op was one that we should take great pride in, quite frankly, because it is something that is joint with the federal government in terms of the CMHC, but also the kind of support that it has received throughout all the communities in the province.

The other kind of strength that I see in co-op housing is when there's an emergency. A couple of years ago, there was a fire in one of the co-op housing units, and it was in the middle of the night. People were quick to make sure that the people most affected would be safely brought out; there were people who were disabled and who had to be helped out. There was no loss of life, but people were there, quite frankly, in nothing more than their nightshirts.

1750

The Salvation Army organized clothing and household contributions from the community. In fact, they were so overwhelmed with the contributions they got, whether it was children's clothing, blankets, towels or whatever people needed, that they actually had to say, "Thanks, we've got enough." The local restaurants gave people vouchers for breakfast and for lunches in order to be able to provide that kind of support for people who suddenly found themselves homeless.

It took a while before they were able to go back to those units, simply because of the smoke damage and things like that, but I think that it tells us a lot about why co-ops are so important in each of our communities and the kind of opportunity that they provide to families, particularly, who might not otherwise have both the stability of a permanent address and the security that comes with that kind of community.

In terms of specific issues, I think it's important to look at—despite the concerns of others with regard to the time, that wasn't a concern when we prorogued. Obviously, this is a bill that requires a certain amount of consideration because it does impact on communities across the province.

The idea of changing things from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board in terms of disputes—I recognize the value of taking them out of the courts in terms of the kinds of expenses that you're looking at. It's suggested that people would be obliged—somewhere between \$3,000 to \$5,000, and there's a backlog on cases being heard.

I know that in my own community's case, I've had members from that community come to see me about the difficulties that they have in those kinds of disputes that simply crop up as part of human existence, where they

then are seeking some kind of redress. We all know that justice is not served unless—I can't remember the exact wording of the saying—justice delayed; that's it. Justice delayed is not justice served, and for people who are living in quite close proximity of each other, and there are things that are happening in those neighbouring homes, it's a huge strain on the family to have to wait before there's any kind of resolution.

I think that the bill—looking at moving it from there to the Landlord and Tenant Board is probably a good one, but I sense a cautionary tale here. In the 2011 report *Justice Denied: Ontario's Broken Rent Dispute Process*—all is not well there either, in terms of the manner in which things can be resolved in a speedy way.

I think that a bill such as this is one that very much deserves to go to hearings, because of the fact that we're talking about the manner in which people's lives are directly affected.

The question of the \$45 fee that has come into this bill is one that raises a lot of red flags. Who decides who's eligible? Generally speaking, one decision is not the only decision. People want to appeal it. People want to see some kind of cost recovery. There are all kinds of issues that need to be determined before the government should move on the question of the \$45. At the same time, it's also an opportunity to look at the efficiency of the Landlord and Tenant Board, because obviously, it may be equally overwhelmed by this.

In wrapping up, I would just say that it's most important, I think, for all of us as MPPs, recognizing the value of the co-op housing movement and the kind of opportunity it brings in our neighbourhoods and in our communities, and at the same time we have an obligation to make sure that this piece of legislation, which is going to have a direct impact on people's lives, is done with the care that only comes when you are able to provide the public with the consultation process of committee hearings.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Just to wrap up, Mr. Speaker, we're hoping to get this into committee. We want to thank the folk here from the co-op movement who want to move it along as quickly as possible. God knows, we want to do everything to help the co-op movement to have more co-ops and better co-ops, and we just ask our neighbours to the right again—it's going to come back next week—to keep it short. We have debated this ad nauseam now, and it's time to get going.

Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and to all a good night.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, we were prorogued for exactly 18 days of sittings, so that's the truth, which is about the smallest in any record of any party. So if the party opposite has an issue with that, shame on them, because there's a word for that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

Questions and comments? The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for your patience as well.

I also want to again thank the member from York-Simcoe, who brought civility and a patient tone to her comments in respect to the topic that we're dealing with.

Now, I have taken notice that in the House here today—two, three, four, five, six, seven—there's about 11—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Now, I'm only saying this: I'm impressed that the only Liberal members here are mostly cabinet members or want to be cabinet members. Now, Ms. Jaczek should be in cabinet. She should actually be the health minister because she's a doctor.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, seriously.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Look, I had no portfolios, but I had the liberty to speak my mind, which I continue to do, and that's the privilege of being here. Never lose sight—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, look, I've made mistakes. If you haven't made any, you haven't done anything yet. I would only say this: If a person hasn't made a mistake, they haven't done anything.

And I say to right now, today, that this bill—there are members of our caucus who want to retain the right to speak, and the person in this House who wants to deny them that right, you stand up now and tell them so, that they cannot speak in this Ontario Legislature. It's the very duty and the very principle of this discussion. The lengthy discussions on Bill 14 are not really the salient point here; the salient point here is that we have an intransigent minority government who's waiting to play footsie with the NDP. We'll see this all play out on May 2, and it's very much a collusion of ideas—a collusion of ideas or a lack of ideas altogether, as far as I'm concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank you for being patient. You've allowed me to wander rather freely on

some of these topics. For that, I will always be truly grateful. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Mercifully, I'm the second-last person to speak tonight; mercifully, the debate is going to be over. We are going to hear another two minutes from my good colleague from York-Simcoe, and then that's it for the debate.

I am asking, please, you don't need to do this when we come back next week. Please don't bring these people back here again. Please, let's get on with this. That's what we're all about here: passing laws for the people of Ontario, not speaking to hear ourselves speak.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for York-Simcoe, you have two minutes.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** Thank you to all those of you who have responded to the remarks that I made.

I think that clearly the issues around being able to present our views in this Legislature are things that we all hold as near and dear, and the opportunity to be able to bring those forward even as the day becomes longer and longer.

I would only want to suggest to those who are here that the opportunity to speak to this bill, to be able to remind all of us why we are here and what the importance is—I just came across a letter that was sent to one of my colleagues on this issue. He's writing about the fact that he's afraid that nothing will be done. He's afraid that there will be no changes made. He talks about the fact that his own personal life is impacted by the kind of problems that he has with his neighbours and as well, in some cases, between landlords and tenants.

He writes: "I can only hope they have not teamed up to not pay. I look after my buildings."

These are real people. These are issues that we all need to take seriously, and we certainly need to be able to further the legislative process to send this into committee.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1801.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Emie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakubuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉ PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

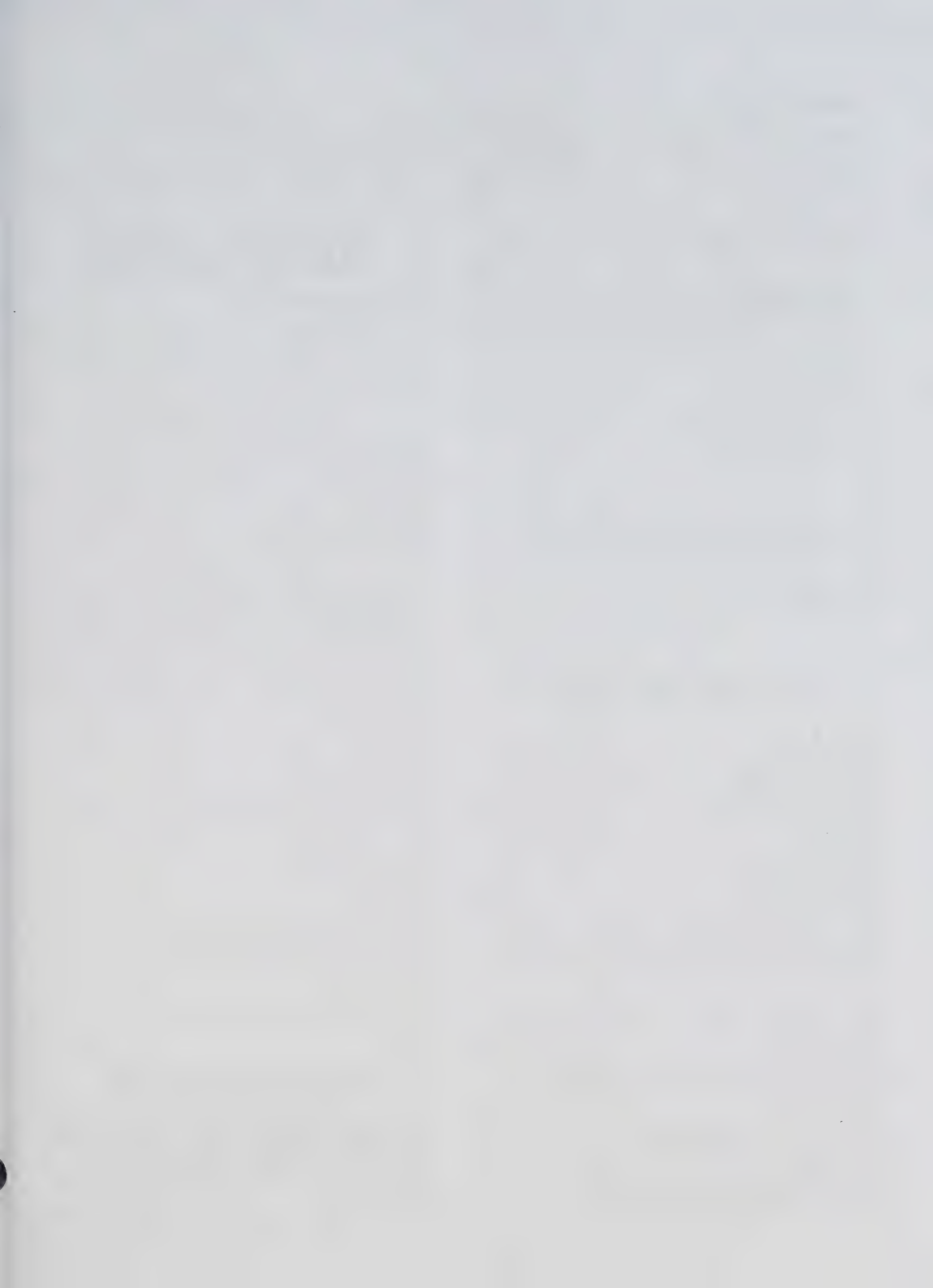
Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margaret R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short





*Continued from back cover*

## **Visitors**

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1540
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1540
Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1540

## **Answers to written questions**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	1540
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1540

## **Legislative pages**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1540
------------------------------------	------

## **Visitor**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1541
------------------------------------	------

## **Correction of record**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1541
-------------------------------	------

## **Correction of record**

Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1541
-------------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1541
Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	1541

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Kate's Kause**

Mr. Michael Harris.....	1541
-------------------------	------

### **Hockey for Health**

Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1541
-------------------------	------

### **Volunteers**

Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	1541
------------------------	------

### **Haleigh Wiggins**

Mr. Norm Miller .....	1542
-----------------------	------

### **Clinton Street Junior Public School**

Mr. Rosario Marchese.....	1542
---------------------------	------

### **McMaster Children's Hospital ophthalmology centre**

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	1542
-----------------------------	------

### **Reg Chappell**

Mr. Frank Klees .....	1543
-----------------------	------

### **DECA International Career Development Conference**

Ms. Soo Wong.....	1543
-------------------	------

### **Huck Finn Youth Fishing Day**

Mr. John O'Toole.....	1543
-----------------------	------

### **Notice of dissatisfaction**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1543
------------------------------------	------

## **MOTIONS**

### **Aggregate resources review**

Hon. John Milloy .....	1543
Motion agreed to .....	1544

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **National Day of Mourning**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	1544
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1545
Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1545

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Springwater Provincial Park**

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	1546
---------------------	------

### **Hydro rates**

Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1546
--------------------------	------

### **Family caregiver leave**

Ms. Soo Wong.....	1546
-------------------	------

### **Land use planning**

Mr. Frank Klees .....	1547
-----------------------	------

### **Dog ownership**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1547
-----------------------	------

### **Electoral boundaries**

Ms. Soo Wong.....	1547
-------------------	------

### **Water quality**

Mr. John O'Toole.....	1547
-----------------------	------

### **Animal protection**

Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1548
--------------------------	------

### **Children's psychiatric medication**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	1548
-----------------------------	------

### **Diagnostic services**

Mme France Gélinas .....	1548
--------------------------	------

### **Tire disposal**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1548
-------------------------	------

### **Long-term care**

Mme France Gélinas .....	1549
--------------------------	------

### **Tire disposal**

Mr. John O'Toole.....	1549
-----------------------	------

## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2013, Bill 50,**

Mrs. Munro / Loi de 2013 sur les régimes de pension agréés collectifs, projet de loi 50, Mme Munro .....	1549
--	------

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	1551
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	1552
Mr. Todd Smith .....	1553
Mr. Rosario Marchese .....	1554
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1554
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1555
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	1556
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1556
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1556

#### **Home care**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1557
Mr. Phil McNeely .....	1558
Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1559
Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1560
Ms. Helena Jaczek .....	1560
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1561
Mme France G��linas .....	1562
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	1562
Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1563
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1564

#### **Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, 2013, Bill 32, Mr. Dhillon, Mr. Prue, Mrs. Elliott / Loi de 2013 sur les professionnels en ressources humaines inscrits, projet de loi 32, M. Dhillon, M. Prue, Mme Elliott**

Mr. Vic Dhillon .....	1564
Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1565
Mr. Rod Jackson .....	1566
Hon. David Zimmer .....	1567
Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1567
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1567
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1569
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1570
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1571
Mr. Vic Dhillon .....	1571

#### **Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2013, Bill 50, Mrs. Munro / Loi de 2013 sur les r  gimes de pension agr  s collectifs, projet de loi 50, Mme Munro**

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon) .....	1571
---	------

#### **Home care**

Motion agreed to .....	1571
------------------------	------

#### **Registered Human Resources Professionals Act, 2013, Bill 32, Mr. Dhillon, Mr. Prue, Mrs. Elliott / Loi de 2013 sur les professionnels en ressources humaines inscrits, projet de loi 32, M. Dhillon, M. Prue, Mme Elliott**

Second reading agreed to .....	1572
--------------------------------	------

<b>Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2013, Bill 50, Mrs. Munro / Loi de 2013 sur les r��gimes de pension agr��s collectifs, projet de loi 50, Mme Munro</b>	
Second reading agreed to .....	1572

#### **ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

#### **Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013, Bill 14, Mrs. Jeffrey / Loi de 2013 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les coop  ratives de logement sans but lucratif, projet de loi 14, Mme Jeffrey**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	1572
Mr. Mike Colle .....	1574
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1574
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1574
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1574
Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	1574
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	1574
Mr. Rosario Marchese .....	1576
Ms. Helena Jaczek .....	1576
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1576
Miss Monique Taylor .....	1577
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	1577
Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1577
Mr. Jonah Schein .....	1578
Mr. Phil McNeely .....	1578
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1578
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1579
Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1579
Mr. Rod Jackson .....	1579
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1581
Ms. Helena Jaczek .....	1581
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	1581
Mr. Rosario Marchese .....	1581
Mr. Rod Jackson .....	1581
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1582
Mr. Jonah Schein .....	1583
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1583
Mr. Rod Jackson .....	1584
Miss Monique Taylor .....	1584
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1584
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1584
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1585
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	1585
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1586
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1586
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1586
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1586



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 25 April 2013 / Jeudi 25 avril 2013

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Local Food Act, 2013, Bill 36, Ms. Wynne / Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux, projet de loi 36, Mme Wynne

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1517
Mr. Grant Crack.....	1518
Mr. Toby Barrett.....	1519
Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1519
Ms. Soo Wong.....	1519
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1520
Mr. Rod Jackson.....	1520
Mr. John Vanthof.....	1522
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	1522
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1522
Mr. Michael Mantha.....	1523
Mr. Rod Jackson.....	1523
Mr. Toby Barrett.....	1523
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	1525
Mr. Grant Crack.....	1525
Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	1525
Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1526
Mr. Toby Barrett.....	1526
Mr. Bill Walker.....	1526
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	1528

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Norm Miller.....	1528
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1528
Mr. Frank Klees.....	1528
Ms. Cindy Forster.....	1528
Mr. Steven Del Duca.....	1528
Mr. Kim Craitor.....	1528
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	1529
Hon. Mario Sergio.....	1529
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1529

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Power plants

Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	1529
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1529

### Government accountability

Mr. Frank Klees.....	1530
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1530
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	1530

### Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1531
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1531
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1531

### Ontario budget

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1532
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1532

### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1533
Hon. John Milloy.....	1533

### Power plants

Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1533
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1533
Hon. John Milloy.....	1534

### Ontario budget

Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	1534
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1534

### Power plants

Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	1534
Hon. John Milloy.....	1535

### Protection for workers

Ms. Cindy Forster.....	1535
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	1536

### Protection for workers

Mr. Kim Craitor.....	1536
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	1536

### Pan Am Games

Mr. Rod Jackson.....	1537
Hon. Michael Chan.....	1537

### Government's record

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	1538
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	1538

### Pan Am Games

Mr. Vic Dhillon.....	1538
Hon. Michael Chan.....	1538

### Property taxation

Mr. Norm Miller.....	1539
Hon. Linda Jeffrey.....	1539

### Water quality

Mr. Michael Mantha.....	1539
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	1539
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	1540

### Correction of record

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1540
-----------------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*



**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 29 April 2013**

**Lundi 29 avril 2013**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 29 April 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 29 avril 2013

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to welcome the Canadian Beverage Association. In the members' gallery are Jim Goetz, president of the Canadian Beverage Association, and member representatives including Neil Antymis, PepsiCo Beverages; John Challinor, Nestlé Waters; Wayne Delfino, Canada Dry Mott's; Jenny Gusba, PepsiCo Beverages; Erika Mozes, Coca-Cola Canada; and John Wren, Cott Beverages. I hope the members will take time to meet with them at their reception this evening in the legislative dining room.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Joining us in the east gallery at some point: Donna Tranquada, from the North Dufferin Agricultural and Community Taskforce; Carl Cosack, who's the chair of that same group; Dave Vander Zaag, who's a Melancthon potato farmer; and Harvey Kolodny, professor emeritus, Rotman School. Welcome to the House.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'd like to introduce a summer intern who's going to be working in my office for the next number of months: Eugenie Lambert, from Paris, France. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'd like to welcome folks from the Nature Conservancy of Canada here today. Kate Lyons is the chair of Nature Conservancy of Canada in Ontario, and James Duncan is the vice-president in charge of Nature Conservancy of Canada in Ontario.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am delighted to welcome to the House Kyle Olsen. Kyle is a former resident of Toronto Centre, but he now works for Premier Alison Redford in Alberta. Let's show him how we operate here.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I have four special guests here today: Kayla Goulding, from my riding, painted a beautiful picture which we're unveiling today at 1:30 in my office, room 444—everyone is welcome—and her friend Brie Welch. Marg Goulding is here; and Al Goulding is here. He's the co-founder of Railway City Brewing, whose Dead Elephant Ale is served every day in this fine establishment.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I have three guests here today from the People First group: Kory Earle, Marg McLean and Richard Ruston. Welcome, all.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to welcome two residents from Prince Edward county here today: Lyn Tracey and her daughter, Rachael Tracey, sitting in the west members' gallery.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I want to welcome Elena Woydich, a German exchange student who is staying with a family from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, and a friend of hers, Alexa Tagura, who are here today to see how Queen's Park operates.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to welcome, from my riding of Durham, page Tenzin Shomar. Here today also are his father, Phurbu, as well as his mother, Tsering, and his sister, Dephel. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Good morning. I too would like to welcome Kate Lyons and James Duncan from the Nature Conservancy of Canada in Ontario. I encourage all members to drop into their reception in committee room 230 following question period. Welcome, and thank you for all the work that you do.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd like to welcome Anne Nahuis, Bernard Pope and Robert Wright from the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture. Welcome.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** This may be unconventional, but I want to extend congratulations to the member from Nepean–Carleton on her Sens stumbling into the play-offs, and we wish them an enjoyable four games.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That was unorthodox. Further introductions?

Finally, I have one. Would the members please join me in welcoming a visiting table officer who is on attachment this week with our table. Shannon Dean is the senior parliamentary counsel and director of House services with the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Welcome.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think the Minister of the Environment is asking me to help him today. Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We have a class from Mississauga South just arriving—I'd like to give them an opportunity to walk in—they're from St. Paul Secondary School. There are going to be about 75 students listening to us cordially discussing and debating today, and I appreciate the students being here from grade 10 civics classes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll have one more call for introduction of guests. There being none, it is now time for oral questions.



## ORAL QUESTIONS

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier. At 11:30 today, just after question period, Jim Wilson, the PC House leader, the member for Simcoe-Grey, will be tabling a want of confidence motion in the assembly. The motion will reflect the sadness, anger and frustration of Ontario taxpayers that the Liberal Party is putting their own interests ahead of the interests of taxpayers, that you chose to spend probably over \$1 billion to cancel gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga instead of addressing the real concerns around jobs and spending within our means.

Premier, given the seriousness of this issue and the motion coming before the House today, will you agree to have this motion debated here in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Premier?

1040

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It is absolutely within the purview of the party opposite to work to hold the government to account. In a minority Parliament it is absolutely within his control to suggest that there be a non-confidence motion at any point.

But the reality is, we have a very large confidence issue that will come before this House very shortly. Within this week, we're going to be presenting a budget. I really believe that the fact we're introducing the budget on Thursday gives this Parliament an opportunity to vote on and express confidence or non-confidence in the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** This is helpful that the Premier acknowledges the rights of the opposition to bring this forward, and I assure you, we take this with the utmost seriousness and we believe we need to do the right thing on behalf of Ontarians. But I worry, Premier, that the NDP has already indicated that they're willing to prop up your government if you make enough commitments around increasing taxes and spending.

I think this matter is serious enough in itself. It crosses the line towards a government that appears to be corrupted to make these types of decisions. You were around the cabinet table, a senior McGuinty minister who has a hand in these decisions. I think that the people around Ontario want to see the gas plant scandal put before a vote to the assembly. Do they have confidence in a government that has made this decision and if they stay in office will simply do so again? Premier, will you do the right thing and allow this motion to stand for debate and a vote in the Legislative Assembly?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've done exactly what I said I would do on the issue of the relocation of gas plants. I was committed to being open and transparent. That process is unfolding in committee.

The reality is, Mr. Speaker, the confidence vote, the confidence issue that will be before this House, the budget, is extremely important to the people of Ontario and I think that the people of Ontario—not to put thoughts in their minds, but I would expect the Leader of the Opposition would read the budget before he decided not to vote for it.

To be fair, the third party has simply said that they are going to look at the budget before they make the decision. There is no guarantee, and I completely respect the decision that the third party has taken. But I think it is questionable that the Leader of the Opposition has said that he's not even going to look at the budget before he rejects it out of hand.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier knows we've had a number of meetings where I put ideas on the table to get our economy going again, to restore hope to those who have lost hope in the province, and also to bring forward a budget that actually reduces spending, not increases spending.

You've made a decision, as you indicated in your interviews this weekend, that you and I don't see eye to eye on how to approach the big issues. I respect your opinion. We just simply disagree on the approach.

But here's what this comes to. This is what I worry about. The Liberal government, in your words, made intentional decisions to cancel, first, the Oakville plant, no matter what the cost, and then a year or so later you decided to cancel the Mississauga gas plant, no matter what the cost, instead of addressing the big issues. If you got away with it for Oakville, if you got away with it for Mississauga, why should taxpayers not believe that you're going to try it again? That's why we need this vote. How we know you won't try to pull this stunt again?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I just want to go back to the discussions that the Leader of the Opposition and I have had. They have been very collegial, and it has been a pleasure to be able to sit down with him. In fact, if he were to read the budget before he decided not to vote for it, I believe he would see that there are issues that have been raised by him and by a member of his caucus. The member for Haldimand-Norfolk, for example, called on us to implement the Brighter Prospects report to look at the untangling of the social assistance program and to look at the recommendations that Munir Sheikh and Frances Lankin put forward. I think if the Leader of the Opposition took the chance to look at our budget, he might see that we are moving in that direction, and he'll be able to see that on Thursday.

I believe, I contend, that there will be common ground in our budget that both the Leader of the Opposition and his party and the NDP could find if they chose to read the budget before they rejected it.

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier on the topic of the confidence motion around the cancellation of the gas

plants in this province and on the topic of the budget vote.

There used to be a day when there was modesty about budgets. You'd wait and see what was in the budget. These Liberals have been very clear on the direction they're going to go. You've basically had a new spending announcement every day; you're making another spending announcement later today. You've already signalled that you're going to increase taxes in the province. You call them revenue tools, but you're increasing taxes.

Speaker, more of the same is not going to get us out of this mess. We need to go in the opposite direction: Hold the line, reduce spending and lower taxes.

Let me ask you this: We know the kinds of games Dalton McGuinty played. He prorogued this Legislature for four months; you supported that decision. Please don't tell me that you'll engage in Dalton McGuinty games by trying to block this very important motion of confidence. Please tell us, Premier: You're not going to stand in the way and block what Ontarians want us to do and have a vote on this measure?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

We've started that process again today, and I'd like to stop it, which is when somebody is putting the question, I'm hearing people from that side of the bench say stuff while the person is putting the question, which is not helpful; and in this case, when the answers are coming, I'm hearing heckling from the answer. I can't hear either one as clearly as I'd like to, so please respect each other on both fronts, and then also tone the heckling down.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** There is a process under way. There is a process under way in the justice committee, where a full range of questions is being asked about the issue that the Leader of the Opposition is raising, the issue around the relocation of the gas plants. I wrote to the Auditor General. I asked that he examine the cost of the Oakville relocation. I am appearing before the committee tomorrow. I don't know if the Leader of the Opposition has agreed to do that. He's been asked, but my hope is that he would also appear before the committee.

So that process is in place, and because the committee has a broadened mandate, they're able to ask questions on a full range of all the issues surrounding the relocation of the gas plants.

There is a confidence issue coming before this House that will affect everyone in this province, Mr. Speaker, because the budget is wide-ranging. All of the issues in the budget will affect the people of Ontario. I believe that that is the confidence issue that should be considered by this House fully, with everyone having read the documents.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier has been clear: Her budget will increase spending; you make a new announcement every day. You've indicated that you're going to

bring in new revenue tools, which—you have used the term euphemistically—does refer to new taxes. I just don't think that more of the same that got us into this mess is going to get us out of this mess.

I want to see Ontario back on its feet. I want to see Ontario strong and proud, creating jobs and leading Canada. Your plan is not going to do so.

What I worry about, Speaker, is that the Liberal government seems to be in the mode to give whatever spending promises the NDP demands. That's going to dig our hole deeper. Any government that's focused strictly on survival is not going to be the kind of government that we need to actually take us on a new and different path.

The bottom line here, Premier: The NDP may prop you up on that vote, but I want an honest question put before all members of the assembly on behalf of all Ontarians. Is the gas scandal—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Does it go so far that the confidence in this government has been badly shaken and we need a new team to lead this province of Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I really believe I've spoken to the confidence issue. I think that the budget is the confidence issue that the House needs to—

**Interjection:** Consider.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:**—consider. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the vision for the province, when the Leader of the Opposition talks about his vision for the province and the province prospering, I believe that we share that, but I also believe that we need a fairer society as well.

I also believe that fiscal responsibility and a fairer society are not mutually exclusive. I think not waiting another 40 years to build transit in the province is a good idea. I believe that investing in youth and making sure that youth have access to employment—I believe youth having the opportunities to find employment—that's an investment in the future. That's going to make Ontario more prosperous.

Those are the investments that we're going to make in the context of fiscal responsibility. I haven't heard those—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, please come to order.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier speaks passionately about a fair society, but I ask the Premier, when you have 600,000 of our friends, our neighbours, our relatives, folks watching the Legislative Assembly at home today who have no job to go to Monday morning—they'll have no job to go to next Monday as well. They're losing hope in the province of Ontario. What is exactly—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Energy, come to order.



**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —about your decision to spend a billion dollars to save Liberal seats, to try to buy the last election campaign, to bail out the Liberal Party ahead of those 600,000 folks who know we can do a lot better in this province, who know we can restore hope. There is nothing fair about your decision to put the Liberal Party's interests ahead of the interests of hard-working Ontario families.

1050

Premier, you know in your heart the right thing to do. The wrong thing is to dodge this vote. The wrong thing is for the Liberals to use their position to block this motion. Let's do right by Ontarians. Do what they want us to do. Call the vote on the gas plant scandal. Let people stand up and decide where they stand. We know where we stand.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am committed to bringing forward a budget that is even-handed, that is going to be fiscally responsible, that is going to make sure that we put in place supports to make Ontario a fairer society.

Mr. Speaker, I think what is right at this moment is that all parties in this Legislature work together. We had a provincial election not that long ago. I believe that the people of Ontario expect us to work together and to avoid an unnecessary election. I believe that working together is exactly what the people of Ontario have asked us to do, and if all parties in this House read the budget and look at what's there, I believe they will find much to support.

#### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. It's clear that people have to see some real, positive change in the upcoming budget. They're worried about their parents and their grandparents who are waiting for home care; kids who are well into their twenties who are still living at home and looking for work; and being stuck with the highest auto insurance rates in the entire country. They're tired of seeing these priorities pushed aside to make way for more corporate tax loopholes, Speaker, and hospital CEO salaries that continue to spike up. Is the Premier prepared to offer real action in this budget, or are we just going to get more of their same conversation?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The conversations came first, and the conversations are very important in order to understand not just what the opposition parties were concerned about and were looking for, but what people across the province were looking for, which is why the Minister of Finance talked to hundreds of thousands of people in person and on the phone. We held round tables around the province, talking to businesses, making sure we understood what their concerns were, and their concerns more often than not were about the mismatch between the skills that many of our youth have got and

the jobs that are actually available. So we need to find a way to close that gap.

Mr. Speaker, to the question of the leader of the third party: We intend to take real action. We have laid out a plan. That plan will be before the House on Thursday. I look forward to everyone reading the budget and determining that they can support it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, for young people waiting to start their careers, this is not an abstract issue. Youth unemployment is over 16% in this province. Young people and their parents want to see a real plan that actually rewards the companies who put youth on the path to a good job in a real career. Instead, they see a government that's ready to pour millions upon millions of dollars into tax loopholes that reward companies when they're buying drinks and box seats for their clients and customers. They want to know why their challenges are being ignored by the government. What does the Premier have to say to those people?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that I am very concerned about a 16.5% unemployment rate for young people. It's unacceptable. I completely agree with the leader of the third party. We need to do something about that, but we need to do something that is going to actually address the issue. We need to make sure that business and labour and government are working together, because there isn't one simple solution to this. It's about the skills mismatch. It's about opportunities for young people to have access to placements and co-ops. It's about making sure that as our students go through secondary school, they know what the pathways are when they get to the end of high school, and that we have the right pathways in place not just in our urban centres but in all of our centres, in the rural communities, in the north, because it's not just young people in urban centres who need that access. That's the kind of approach that we are going to take to make sure that there is a real approach and real action for young people.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** When I talk to young people, Speaker, they tell me that they have the skills; they have the desire; they have the ambition. They can't get their foot in the door of an employer. That's their problem.

Here's what they see: They're struggling to find work and they're struggling to start their careers. For 10 years, their government has offered tax breaks and opened new loopholes to Ontario's largest corporations while promising that somehow it was going to create jobs. Well, guess what? It didn't.

They're tired of vague promises and they're tired of vague conversations that may get them something 20 years from now, when they're 40 years old. They want to see real change and they want to see it now. Will the Premier take action with a plan that rewards companies when they hire young people and give them some experience on the job, not when they're expensing a dinner for their clients?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** There are two points to deal with here.

The member talks about input tax credits. They're not a loophole. It's not a tax break; it's not a giveaway; and it's not new. It's a value-added system that we brought in place to inspire more investment and more growth. As a result of implementing these tax reforms, we have created more jobs, we have created investment, and over 400,000 net new jobs have come to the province.

The other aspect of the question was on our youth unemployment. We are taking action right now, Mr. Speaker, and we have, in trying to find ways to marry up our youth with our employers. That's why we're implementing, in this budget, initiatives around that very fact.

I appreciate the question, and we are addressing loopholes, which are, in fact, companies that don't pay their fair share. We're dealing with that with the federal government.

#### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, opening up a new tax opportunity for companies, whether it's a tax loophole or a new opportunity, is still giving away \$1.3 billion to the corporations of this province.

My next question is to the Premier, Speaker. People are really tired of feeling that they're actually falling further and further behind. That's the crux of the problem that we have in this province. They're weary of government promises that don't lead to results for them. They've been told that CEO salary hikes in hospitals and corporate tax loopholes and breaks to the insurance industry were going to somehow create jobs, improve health care and make life more affordable for them, but they see that it just has not delivered. Instead, they see a government that's spending millions and millions of dollars on cancelled gas plants and more tax loopholes, while their priorities get little more than lip service.

Is the Premier ready to admit that we need to move beyond the promises and beyond the vague commitments of eventually getting something done and actually delivering to the people of this province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just on the issue of our recovery, Mr. Speaker, and how we've been doing in the province: We have regained more than 100% of the jobs that were lost in the depths of the economic downturn. What we have been doing is working. We are seeing success.

On the broader issues of what the people of Ontario have been able to see over the last few years in terms of achievement, we've moved from last to first in terms of wait times in our health care. We have improved the education system to the point where our students are achieving at the very highest ranks internationally. The investments that have been made over the last nine years have produced results.

In terms of changing the way we address issues around young people being prepared to get into the

workforce: I agree; there's more that needs to be done. We need to address that issue, and that's one of the things that you will see addressed in the budget when we deliver it on Thursday.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, New Democrats crossed the province when the government shut this place down for their own personal needs. We actually crossed the province and spent that time talking to people and families about how they actually contribute to our province. They told us that what they want to see in this upcoming budget is a very balanced approach. They also told us that they're very tired of a government firing nurses, asking families to pay more, while handing away millions and millions and millions of dollars cancelling private power deals, creating brand new loopholes for Ontario's largest corporations and watching hospital CEO salaries continue to spike.

The Premier can send people a signal today that she's offering more than just conversation and vague promises. Will she commit to cancelling the tax loopholes and capping CEO salaries in hospitals?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

1100

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. These aren't tax loopholes. They're not giveaways. They're not tax breaks. They are restricted tax inputs that exist now, that expire in 2015 on to 2018, as part of the value-added tax system. They involve vehicles, they involve telecommunications, and some of them involve meals and entertainment. We get that. We're dealing with the federal government because it also involves them, and in order for us to proceed effectively, we need their co-operation.

But what's happening now as a result of those initiatives and those tax reforms? It's created a greater incentive of investment of those businesses in Ontario. As a result, it has created jobs. Those jobs are what we need to have right now, and this budget will speak about how we can create even more jobs and how we can create a more balanced approach in achieving it.

It's not taking extreme measures; it's taking the proper measures that the people of Ontario expect us to take.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The finance minister continues to play up or to defend an HST scheme that didn't create the 600,000 jobs they promised, and now is about to hand corporations another \$1.3 billion to send wherever they want, not necessarily to create jobs.

People have heard a lot of talk from this government, and they know that it's time for action. Over 10 years of Liberal government have gone by, and the government has failed the people of this province. They continue to fall further and further behind while the well-connected few have gotten all of the breaks.

What they want: a five-day home care guarantee, not CEO salary hikes; an actual youth jobs plan, not more corporate tax loopholes; affordable auto insurance, not



higher industry profits and payouts. They want to see a government that puts the needs of the people looking for work and better health care ahead of the needs of their party's election chances in Oakville and Mississauga.

Is the Premier ready to do that, or are we going to see more of the same old status quo?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the question and I understand the concerns, because we share them. We all want to see more prosperity in the province of Ontario. We're all working towards that. That's why Ontario now produces more jobs than the rest of Canada combined. In fact, the very issues that the member talks about in regard to the restricted tax credits are the very things that Quebec and the Atlantic provinces are dealing with as well. They too have phased them out as a result of the federal system.

We're working towards the same goal, as is the third party and, I would assume, as is the opposition. The official opposition recognizes that what we're doing is going to have a great benefit to the province of Ontario. They too should be supporting this budget.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** This morning, my question is for the Premier.

Week after week, we've had men and women come to the justice committee. They put their hand on a Bible, they swear an oath to tell the whole truth, then they give a sworn testimony that is completely different to what we hear from this Liberal government. The Premier says that the total cost of cancelling Oakville is \$40 million, yet under oath, we hear sworn testimony that there are buckets of costs more than that.

The Liberal gas plant scandal is the last straw for Ontarians. They've lost their confidence in these Liberals. Premier, will you bring our want of confidence motion forward in this Legislature?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's talk a little bit about the justice committee and the hearings that are taking place tomorrow. Last week, we got to witness the dramatics, the arrogance of the member from Leeds–Grenville when he stood up and asked the Premier the following question: "Next Tuesday you've been invited to appear before the justice committee. Will you confirm to the House today that you will order and instruct your staff to not play calendar or scheduling games?"

The Premier will be there tomorrow. My question is, why did the Leader of the Opposition refuse to appear tomorrow when invited by government members?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Of course, you know that our—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Order, please. Please. A third time: Please. The member from Simcoe–Grey, come to order. The member from

Leeds–Grenville, come to order. That's better. Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** As everybody in this Legislature knows, our leader will indeed be at the gas plant Liberal scandal hearings shortly.

Premier, no matter what the Liberal staffers hold back from the justice committee, believe it or not, we've now been getting to the truth. The Auditor General's report on the Mississauga cancellation showed us the true story and the depths of this scandal. It was much higher than any of the former—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener–Conestoga will withdraw.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Carry on.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Higher than any of the former energy ministers or the current energy minister admitted to, even higher than the Ontario Power Authority admitted to.

Now, Premier, the same thing is happening with the Oakville cancellation. You know exactly how high this cancellation is going to cost. You chaired that cabinet meeting that started the process.

Will you now call our want of confidence motion to the floor of this Legislature? Will you do that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, we don't know the Leader of the Opposition will be before the committee.

The arrogance of the opposition to stand up and say to the Premier, "Are you going to play calendar or scheduling games?" and then turn around and have the Leader of the Opposition play calendar and scheduling games.

You know what else, Mr. Speaker? We've also heard that Geoff Janoscik, the PC candidate in Mississauga South, is refusing to appear before the committee. Maybe people remember Geoff Janoscik. He's the one who said in the last campaign, "Unlike the Dalton McGuinty Liberals, the only way to guarantee this power plant does not get built is to elect a Tim Hudak Ontario PC government. A Tim Hudak government will cancel this plant."

He also paid for thousands of robocalls, saying that the only way to cancel the plant was to vote for the Progressive Conservatives.

Will the honourable member encourage his colleague to appear before the committee and encourage the Leader of the Opposition to appear before the committee?

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Premier. When the Premier was asked about her involvement in the now-infamous Project Vapour minute and how much she thought it would cost to cancel the Oakville gas plant

when she signed that document, the Premier directed every question to her House leader.

When the Premier comes to justice tomorrow, will she tell Ontarians how much she thought it would cost to cancel the Oakville gas plant or is she going to continue to play games and hide behind procedure?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'll be at the committee tomorrow. I will answer the questions that the committee asks me.

As I said when I came into this office, it has been my objective from the moment I got into this job to open the process, to allow for all of the questions and to get the answers that the members of the opposition and third party were looking for. That's why I said I would come to the committee. That's why I asked the Auditor General to look at the Oakville situation. That's why we suggested that we open the process, and, in the first instance, the opposition didn't want to open the process. They voted against that.

But we have a more open process now. The questions are being asked. I will be there tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to the interaction with the members.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Tomorrow Colin Andersen, the CEO of the Ontario Power Authority, will be giving their latest estimate of the costs for cancelling the Oakville power plant. Judging from testimony we've heard so far, something tells me that it's going to be more than \$40 million.

Has the Premier been kept in the loop about the latest cost of the Oakville gas plant cancellation?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I said, I will be at the committee tomorrow. I will answer all of the questions that are asked of me. I will make a statement at the committee tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. I really believe that is where we should have this conversation: at the committee. That's why I asked that the mandate of the committee be broadened. That's why I asked that the Auditor General look at the Oakville situation. That's why I am appearing tomorrow, so that we can have this conversation in the context of the justice committee.

#### RURAL EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Rural Affairs. I understand that recently our government announced that our graduation rates have increased for the eighth straight year, and now 115,000 more students have graduated through the investments we've made in education—a complete riding's population of young people with a future. This is fantastic news that shows our student success strategy is working.

1110

But many of my constituents want to know what is being done in rural areas to support their schools. This is an important question because, in order to have a world-class education system, all of our students, no matter where they live, must have access to a great education.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Rural Affairs: Could the minister please inform this House about the investments our government is making to support rural schools?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member from Orléans for his great question. I can assure him it'll be a short series against the Montreal Canadiens.

Our government is committed to making sure that every student has access to a world-class education, no matter where they live. We also know that our rural schools face unique challenges. That is why we've increased funding to our rural boards by more than 30% since 2003. This year, rural boards will receive over \$3 billion. We also know that our schools in rural areas face higher costs for materials and resources. That's why we're providing over \$50 million to help with the purchase of materials so that our students have the resources they need to succeed.

These are only some of the investments we're making to ensure that our schools, no matter where they may be, provide the best education for all our rural students.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thank you, Minister, for your response. I'm glad to hear that the new Ontario government takes the unique needs of rural education seriously. The investments we have made towards rural schools and school boards will ensure that our young students have the opportunities they need to learn in an enriching and fulfilling environment. Now, more than ever, it is vital that our children get the education they need to compete for high-skilled jobs in a global economy. Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Rural Affairs: Could the minister please update the House on what this government is doing to provide students with training in skills to succeed in the 21st-century job market?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** To the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you to the member from Ottawa-Orléans for his question. Our government is committed to providing our students with the skills they need so they can be successful in their future. One program that allows students this opportunity is the Specialist High Skills Majors program. The Specialist High Skills Majors program allows our students to learn essential skills in subject areas including agriculture, technology, aviation and a whole host of other options.

For this school year, over 30,000 students are enrolled in over 1,500 Specialist High Skills Majors programs in over 670 schools across Ontario. We've also created Dual Credit Programs that allow students to work on secondary and college credits at the same things. These are the skills that students learn that will help them transition to the workplace.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** To the Premier: For months now we've been asking you, the members of your new cabinet and countless Liberal minions at committee to



simply come clean on your gas plant scandals in Mississauga and Oakville. It's clear that your only interest is the preservation of the Liberal Party. There is a want of confidence motion ready to be debated. The only thing missing is your willingness to accept your responsibility. The time has come for this Legislature to decide.

Premier, you've continuously talked about an open process that you want to be completely a part of, and completely open with all of the facts. Well, I ask you: Will you do the right thing today, accept your responsibility and agree to bring that motion forward?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, again, I expected to hear from the honourable member some sort of apology for the fact that the leader of the opposition is refusing to appear in front of committee tomorrow. I think it's important to know why we are calling him. It's not simply a case of wanting to have him before the committee; it's to ask him some very specific questions. For example, this brochure that was given to every house in the riding—where was it? The Etobicoke Centre riding association—says that, “The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC party. On October 6, vote Ontario PC.” It has to do with the YouTube video that the Leader of the Opposition starred in, where he went out and said that if he was elected that the local gas plant would be “done, done, done.”

We want to know about the policy analysis that was done, the costing that was done, and we're looking forward to his—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Premier, it seems you people want to turn this into more of a charade. The Leader of the Opposition, Tim Hudak, has made it very clear that he will appear before the committee April 7 or 14, and he wrote the Chair to indicate that.

Premier, the Auditor General indicated in his report that he did not agree at all—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Come to order, please.

To the member.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** —with your version of the Mississauga gas plant cancellation costs. Credible witnesses have also said that your numbers are vastly wrong on the Oakville cancellation and relocation.

This scandal has reached the breaking point. If you believe you've handled it well, then let's put it to a vote. Agree to debate this want-of-confidence motion, and let the assembly decide.

Premier, I have to ask you: Are you afraid of the outcome, or is it true that you've actually lost confidence in yourself?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Government House leader.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, again, I expected, at the minimum, an apology from the opposition: the way they've stood up and challenged the Premier not to “play calendar,” and then the Leader of the Opposition does the same thing.

But you know, what about Geoff Janoscik and the fact that we are informed that he is refusing—he is refusing—to appear in front of the committee? Again, Geoff Janoscik—let me remind people: He was the one who had a candidate robocall in Mississauga South. I'll read it for you; I know it's a favourite: “This is Geoff Janoscik, your Mississauga South Ontario PC candidate. I'm calling about the McGuinty-Sousa power plant that the Liberal government decided to build in your backyard. I am against this power plant, and as your MPP, I will fight to stop the power plant from being built. Unlike the Liberals, our team has been knocking on doors every single evening for several months, talking about the power plant and making sure that we defeat the Liberals in this riding and put an end to their bad decisions.” Mr. Speaker—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. New question.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Premier. On April 15, the head of FSCO, Philip Howell, indicated that he did not have the tools to reduce the auto insurance rates by 15%. In fact, he admitted in committee that he had no way of passing the \$2 billion in savings that the insurance companies are pocketing on to drivers in Ontario. That's why it comes as no surprise that over the past 30 months, our insurance premiums have increased by 5%, despite the \$2 billion of annual savings that insurance companies are enjoying.

This Thursday, will the government table legislation that gives FSCO the legal mandate to actually enact a 15% reduction in auto insurance rates?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the question. We've had this discussion many times. We recognize that the premiums in Ontario are much too high. We also recognize that the cost of claims in Ontario is much too high as well—10 times higher than in other provinces—so we have to deal with both of those issues, and we will.

We will, because we want to ensure that the best interests of the public are met. We did that in 2004, we've committed to doing it again, and we gladly will work with the opposition members—on both sides, for that matter—to try to get that done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** FSCO has released its first-quarter 2013 report, and it comes as no surprise that there are no savings and no reductions in premiums for the nine million drivers in Ontario.

This government has a choice coming before it. It can either continue to allow the insurance industry to pocket

billions of dollars in savings, due to our benefits having been slashed in 2010, or this government can enact legislation that provides FSCO with the legal mandate to actually reduce insurance rates by 15%. This Thursday, which will it be?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We have long been discussing how important it is for us to bring forward a budget that speaks to the needs of the people. It is going to be Ontario's budget. It's going to talk a lot, not just about auto insurance but about a lot of things that matter to those people of Ontario.

It would be a disservice for anyone to dismiss that budget without reading it. That's a disservice to all Ontarians. I would hope that the official opposition will read the budget and give it the responsibility that they have to ensure that the needs of the people are met and ensure that we deal with the matters that the member opposite has just asked.

1120

### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Minister, many small businesses in my riding are very concerned that they're being stopped from promoting the term "local food." There seems to be a definition that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency is using which limits these local food supporters from using that. I've got some of the best local food grocers in Canada in my riding. I've got Pusateri's. I've got Bruno's. I've got Zito's. I've got Lady York. They want to promote local potatoes, local pork, local beef, but because of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, they are being stopped by these bureaucratic rules. What is being done to get rid of the bureaucratic barriers around local food people?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence for this important question.

It's very true, Mr. Speaker, that the CFIA's definition of local food is different than the one that we're proposing in our local food bill. Our view is that the scope of the definition is too narrow and it actually could work against support for local food in ridings like Eglinton–Lawrence, but also among all Ontario farmers. The definition that's proposed in our local food bill is purposely broad. It defines local food as having been produced or harvested in Ontario. It includes foods and beverages made in Ontario if they include ingredients that are produced or harvested in the province. The goal, then, is to ensure that producers and processors are supported and not hindered by a definition that is too narrowly constrained.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Minister, a lot of my local green-grocers and restaurants say they want to bring in potatoes from Melancthon; they want to bring in tomatoes from Leamington. They want that ability to promote these wonderful, beautiful, natural Ontario products. I hope we can get the message across to the Canadian Food Inspec-

tion Agency that we're all supporting local food together, because when local food is eaten, everybody wins. The farmers win, the local restaurants win, the local green-grocers win, and all Ontarians win with wonderful, local Ontario food.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I love the passion from the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

The member is absolutely correct that this is posing a problem for our local businesses, and it goes—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let's bring it down. I think you caught yourself. Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The CFIA definition actually hinders what we're trying to do in the Local Food Act, Mr. Speaker. We've reached out to the federal agriculture and agri-food minister, Minister Ritz. I'm pleased that the CFIA intends to review their definition and work towards being more inclusive and supportive of the local food movement, and I'm very pleased that Minister Ritz has indicated that he's moving to modernize the regulation so that it makes sense and, most importantly, that it supports local food and Ontario farmers. The federal minister has to act on this. It is in his purview. I'm glad that he has indicated that he's willing to take some action.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question today is for the Premier. Premier, in a recent Toronto Star interview, you were unable to answer a simple question about the current unemployment rate in Ontario. When you were asked, you guessed "about 7%," and then you added a hesitant "Did I pass?" Earlier this month, you said that the death of Ontario's manufacturing sector was a myth.

Clearly, solving the jobs crisis in Ontario is not a priority for you or your Liberal government. Premier, let me help. Ontario currently has nearly 600,000 unemployed men and women, and an unemployment rate of 7.7%. Even worse, Ontario's unemployment rate has been above the national average for 75 straight months.

Premier, can you explain how this House can have confidence in your leadership when you don't even know how many men and women are seeking work in Ontario today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I completely understand the question from the member opposite and that he would want to take me to task. The reality is that there is a range of unemployment rates across the province.

First of all, you're right: A 7.7% average across the province is unacceptable, which is why we are putting measures in place in our budget to address that. Job creation is extremely important. Particularly, youth unemployment is unacceptable, which is at a rate of 16.5%. But the other reality: From March 2012 until now, the unemployment rate in Ottawa, for example, is 6.3%, which is down 0.4%; the unemployment rate in Toronto is 8.3%, which is down from March 2012. There are other parts of the province where the unemployment rate



has gone up, and 7.7% is unacceptable, which is why we will be addressing those concerns when we bring the budget forward on Thursday.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Well, Premier, the numbers don't lie. Your government has utterly failed Ontario workers. You've let them down, and you've lost the confidence of the men and women in our communities right across this province. Ontario has now lost over 300,000 manufacturing jobs. In my riding, Tender Tootsies, who employed over 1,000 people at its peak, just announced it will be closing. Premier, for these constituents, being unemployed is no myth.

The Auditor General's scathing report detailed the costs associated with cancelling the Mississauga power plant and showed that the Liberals' political ploy will cost Ontario taxpayers over \$275 million. Premier, do you think it's right for the 600,000 men and women who are currently out of work to be forced to pay for your political treachery?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What I want to say to the 600,000 people who are out of work—if that is the number that the member is putting forward—is that it is unacceptable that they don't have access to work; it is unacceptable that the party opposite would not work with us to address that issue.

The fact is that our budget will bring forward measures that will continue to build on the fundamentals and the conditions that are necessary to bring business to the province. We have put programs in place—for example, the Second Career program, that was designed specifically to deal with the transition of people coming out of the manufacturing sector to help them get into a new career. It has been wildly successful. Thousands of members of this society have had the opportunity to retrain because of that program. That's the kind of solution that people without a job are looking for. That's what we're going to be putting forward.

#### ACADEMIC STREAMING

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Minister of Education. According to People for Education, streaming of high school students in Ontario is alive and well. Students at low-income schools are six times more likely to be placed in applied math classes compared to high-income schools. Students in applied math are half as likely to meet provincial math and literacy standards, and are less likely to graduate.

Does the minister accept the continued streaming of students in Ontario and the barriers to success it presents?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think what's important is that we have options for all students that are appropriate for the individual student. One of the things that we have found extraordinarily successful is the Specialist High Skills Majors courses. I must say that some of the kids in Specialist High Skills Majors are in academic, some are in applied and some are in a combination of both, but what that does is it allows students who have an interest

in more practical courses to actually get credit for that interest on their high school diploma.

What we're seeing with the introduction of courses like Specialist High Skills Majors is, in fact, that the overall graduation rate in Ontario high schools is going up. I think that's what we need to keep our eye on: how many kids are graduating.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Minister, streaming has been discredited. It limits the opportunities of disadvantaged children, yet it continues—and from your response it's clear why. Wealthy children are more likely to take academic courses; low-income, immigrant and aboriginal children are more likely to take applied courses.

Will the minister investigate why low-income children are overrepresented in applied courses and why applied students are less likely to succeed, so that all students have a fair chance for success?

1130

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think we really need to look at what's happening with the graduation rate in Ontario high schools. When we came in in 2003, the high school graduation rate was sitting at 68% of kids; we're now at 83% of our students. We're up 15 percentage points. Part of that is due to the fact that we are providing a range of options for Ontario students.

I absolutely believe that students have the right to choose whether they want to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —focus on academic or focus on more practical skills. We have a responsibility to provide choice to our students, and that choice has—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. When I do say, "Order," I don't have to be specific to one individual, or if I have to, that means that you're not listening at all. So when I say, "Order," you don't just keep right on going; when I say, "Order," you actually have to kind of think that you've heard the Speaker and you bring it down.

New question.

#### HOME WARRANTY PROGRAM

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** My question today is for the Minister of Consumer Services. There are many areas of my riding of Vaughan that are experiencing a great deal of residential development. I am excited to see my riding flourish economically and socially. I certainly welcome all the new residents who are moving to my community; after all, it is one of Ontario's greatest communities. Having said that, I do want to clarify one thing with respect to who exactly is protecting these homebuyers. After all, for most the purchase of a home is the single biggest investment of their lives.

Through you to the minister, how is the government ensuring there is protection for purchasers of new homes?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member for asking this very important question, because he's absolutely right. Home purchases are usually the most important investment decision people make, and that comes with some stress and lots of questions.

I want to assure the member and Ontarians that we have the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act to protect homebuyers. It's administered by Tarion, an independent authority with the legislative mandate to oversee the act and provide services to provide protection for new homeowners. In fact, I was just with them last week for their fantastic customer service awards.

Tarion provides better communication, helps resolve conflicts, educates builders and buyers on quality standards, and finally, Tarion administers a guarantee fund which acts as a backstop to ensure consumer protection is maintained when a builder is unable or unwilling to pay the warranty. This is all required by the act, and all the fees are paid for by the builders—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the minister for her answer and for all of her fine work. I must say that I'm extremely happy to hear that there's an established program, mandated by legislation, to provide warrant protection for new homebuyers across Ontario. It is particularly reassuring to know that there is a guarantee fund that will support a new homebuyer in case of an issue with their new home.

With all of these new home developments spanning across the province—and in my community of Vaughan, as I mentioned—I am definitely pleased to hear that there's a dedicated organization looking out for the well-being of all those new homebuyers.

I'm wondering if the minister could please explain to the House today how Tarion will be working to ensure that they stay ahead of the curve with respect to the most effective consumer protective available for new homebuyers.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** You know, we can always do more to help consumers in Ontario, and Tarion is also looking at new ways to improve their services and offer consumer confidence that they deserve when they're buying a new home.

In fact, I'd like to highlight that just last year, in the annual survey from Tarion, where new homeowners were asked about their level of satisfaction and their impressions of the organization, over 80% of new homebuyers were satisfied with their interactions and had a favourable impression.

Tarion continues to be dedicated to holding builders more accountable and increasing consumer protection. In that light, in 2012, Tarion actually made changes to their major structural defect warranty program in the three- to seven-year category, placing more onus on builders and protecting new homeowners. This highlights Tarion's commitment to enhancing protections for consumers and holding builders more accountable using financial incen-

tives to encourage them to implement better building practices and repair defects.

## NORTHERN ONTARIO

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, given your curious funding announcement for small, rural and northern communities on Friday in my riding, the 140,000-person city of Barrie—which is neither small, rural nor northern, and may not even qualify for the funding that you announced—I have to ask: Did you and your finance minister get lost on the campaign trail? How does the Liberal Party exactly define where northern Ontario begins?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm pretty sure that the rural and northern communities of Ontario, and even the rural communities in Simcoe county, think that it's a good idea that we have a roads and bridges fund.

I have heard consistently, since I was the Minister of Transportation—so, for the last three-and-a-bit years, I have heard consistently that municipalities across the province want to be sure that they will have some predictability and some reliability—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. The government side makes it difficult for me to ask them to come quiet when the Premier is answering the question and you're provoking. So I'm going to ask the members again to stop provoking—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And the comments that people make when I'm in mid-sentence don't help, either. Please.

Please finish your answer.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The exuberance on this side of the House has to do with the reality that every single one of my members, the members of the government, has heard delegations from people from small municipalities, from rural municipalities and from northern municipalities asking for some predictability in terms of infrastructure spending for municipal infrastructure.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That's why we're exuberant. We think that having a predictable fund is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The member from Prince Edward–Hastings will withdraw.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, the member has to show a little bit of understanding of what I'm trying to get at.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary? The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Premier, while you were in Barrie, making your northern Ontario announcement, Tim Hudak and I were actually in the north, unveiling our plan for the north.



Apart from a single token cabinet meeting, there has been little to speak of for the north since you've been Premier, and no movement or progress on the Ring of Fire. Less than a month ago, you voted against a PC plan that would have provided dependable funding while extending the gas tax to these small communities.

Premier, at a time when the province is facing a \$10-billion deficit and we're witnessing cuts to programs in the north, like shutting down provincial parks, closing important visitor information centres and ending the Junior Ranger Program that has been in place for 68 years, my question is simple: Premier, can you explain how you magically came up with \$100 million?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We were up there with nine members of cabinet, meeting with northern mayors. Not only that, we have set a priority for the Ring of Fire. We have put in place a new rural roads and bridges program, thanks to Minister Leal; I want to thank him for doing that.

To the member for Barrie: We like Barrie. We announced together GO Transit, which we invited you to be part of in a non-partisan way. With York-Simcoe, we announced new highways, which we invited you to be in, in a non-partisan way.

Over and over again, Mr. Speaker, we try to work with the opposition—a race to the top, as you put it—and we don't get any co-operation. We get cheap, political—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We have, right now, \$2.4 billion in highways, \$600 million in northern highways. We saved the Experimental Lakes, Mr. Speaker. We are investing in—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is to the Premier. Over the last number of days, my office has been inundated by emails from employees of the Hamilton children's aid society. These employees are terrified about what a \$4-million cut to their services will mean to the vulnerable children in our community. These workers are warning you that the children they serve are going to pay the price.

Will the Premier explain how she can be assured that a \$4-million cut will not affect front-line services or the well-being of these children?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you for the question with respect to the Hamilton CAS. First, let me say that the front-line workers and the work that's done at the CAS are really the backbone of our child protection system.

I can't speak to the specific decisions that CAS is making with respect to their staffing. However, we have come up with a new funding formula for the CASs to be

fair to all CASs across the province—in Hamilton, in Windsor and in communities across the province.

It will bring stability to this sector. The overall provincial funding envelope is staying the same. We have not cut funding in this sector.

The new formula is looking at socio-economic factors in addition to service volume and it will better reflect the underlying need for child welfare services in each community.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Speaker, this year alone the Hamilton CAS is losing 4% of their budget. Staff who are already working overtime and are struggling to meet the growing need in our community are trying to understand how they're going to do more with less. Workers have told me that these cuts will make their jobs impossible, that they are terrified of what this will mean for the already vulnerable children and families they serve.

Is the Premier going to address these concerns or is she just going to ignore this crisis regardless of its impact?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** What I can be clear about is that our ministry is working very closely with the Hamilton CAS and with CASs across the community to ensure that our priority of keeping children safe and keeping our communities safe is our number one priority, and we will ensure that all CASs do that. We will continue to work with them to ensure the sustainability of that system.

The changes that we have made have been all-encompassing with respect to the funding for CASs across the province to ensure that protecting children and youth in our community remains the number one priority. We will continue to work with our communities and with our ministry to ensure that priority is maintained.

#### VISITORS

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Speaker, on a point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order, the Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to introduce some people with us today. Jim Goetz is the president of the Canadian Beverage Association. Other member representatives include Neil Antymis from PepsiCo Beverages, John Challinor from Nestlé Waters, Wayne Delfino from Canada Dry Mott's, Jenny Gusba from PepsiCo Beverages, Erika Mozes from Coca-Cola Canada and John Wren from Cott Beverages.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1142 to 1300.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### JACK BURROWS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** The citizens of the city of North Bay and our entire northern Ontario were very saddened

today to learn of the passing of former mayor Jack Burrows.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I see the minister acknowledging. Jack was an old friend to all of us, Minister.

Jack gave tremendously to our community through his service as a councillor and in his nine years as mayor, from 1994 to 2003. During his term as mayor and for the decade that followed, Jack was a true ambassador for North Bay and indeed for all of northern Ontario. After serving in office, he sat on the board of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, and he applied the same wisdom to that fund as he did during his many years in office in North Bay.

Jack was paid a tremendous tribute only two years ago on his 80th birthday by the North Bay and Area Community Foundation, which he founded. They established a new Jack Burrows Fund, named in his honour, with the purpose of reaching out to one local charity organization each year. Coincidentally, the entire philanthropic community came together only nine days ago when Jack presented this year's award. It's a true reminder of how fleeting life really is.

On a personal note, I always appreciated the fact that I could walk into Jack's Country Store and chat about any issue. He'll be missed by all of us. Our condolences go out to Elaine and the entire Burrows family.

#### HAMILTON HELMET INITIATIVE

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Head injuries are the leading cause of serious injury and death in children. Activities such as cycling, in-line skating and skateboarding can all be safe and healthy forms of recreation, so long as helmets and other necessary pads are worn.

The Hamilton Helmet Initiative is an organization, formed in November 2012, dedicated to encouraging helmet use. The partnership of McMaster Children's Hospital and the city of Hamilton's public services is making sure that all children in the area have access to helmets at a reasonable cost. If a family is unable to afford a helmet, a community sponsor will provide one free of charge.

The Hamilton Helmet Initiative will be hosting an event to celebrate their achievements with their community partners on the morning of Thursday, May 16, at Lake Avenue Public School in Hamilton.

I commend you for your efforts in tackling such a serious issue and for setting such a positive example for communities across this province. Some 88% of brain injuries can be prevented by wearing properly fitted helmets, and with the help of the Hamilton Helmet Initiative, they will be. Keep up the great work.

#### ELLIOTT KERR

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** It is my pleasure to rise in the House today to recognize Elliott Kerr, who will be duly inducted into the Mississauga Sports Hall of Fame this June.

Kerr has left a long-lasting legacy as a leader within Mississauga and beyond. As founder of Landmark Sport Group, his sports event marketing firm has been a part of the Mississauga community since 1987.

But Kerr's contribution to sports goes beyond his business. He has done a lot to promote sport within Mississauga. For instance, his organization spearheaded the Mississauga Marathon, an event that has raised much-needed funding for both regional and national charities and is proudly celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

Some of you may also know him as the owner of the Mississauga Steelheads, formerly known as the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors, which he recently rebranded. He's also the former part-owner of the Mississauga IceDogs. It's no easy task to own a local hockey league in a city like Mississauga, which is just a stone's throw away from the big Toronto market, but Elliott does this because he truly believes that a community needs local sports teams, and for that we are very thankful.

He's also organized the Jane Rogers Championship golf tournament for three years, when the event was held in Mississauga and Halton Hills.

He will be inducted at the sports council's 39th annual sports dinner, taking place this year at the Capitol banquet hall. Please join me in congratulating Elliott Kerr.

#### HARDY SINGH

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Progress through participation—that's the motto of the Halton Regional Police Service. The words have been taken to heart by Burlington resident and Halton police constable Hardy Singh. Constable Singh's outreach work in race relations across the Hamilton-Halton area has earned him community appreciation and special recognition from Toronto's Human Rights and Race Relations Centre. Constable Singh was recently given a gold medal and commemorative certificate for "outstanding contribution to the promotion of race relations."

Constable Singh routinely fields questions from members of the Sikh community, spending countless volunteer hours educating the Sikh community about issues such as domestic violence, community safety and crime prevention, acting as an interpreter at police presentations, and fostering awareness about policing among Sikh children and youth.

Amazingly, all of this has happened in the two years that Constable Singh has been with the Halton police, Speaker. His devotion to the force is rivaled only by his vital service to the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Constable Singh both on the awarding of this honour and his outstanding commitment to doing the work that makes our region such a fantastic place to live.

#### HEALTHY EATING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** In a few minutes I will be introducing for the third time—lucky third time—Healthy



Decisions for Healthy Eating. This is a bill that will mandate restaurants to post calories and high sodium right on their menu boards if they have more than five locations and make over \$5 million in profits.

The Toronto Board of Health, just down the street at city hall, is debating the exact same issue at the exact same time. There is no coincidence here, Mr. Speaker. I bring this bill forward today because the Toronto Board of Health is making it clear that if the province does not show leadership on this issue, they will, and they have given us a time frame to do this, which is by September 1.

What will the bill do? Well, not much that isn't already being done. Those restaurants already know the number of calories in their menu items; they already know which ones are high sodium. They have this information on posters on the way to the bathroom, on a brochure underneath the counter that nobody can find. Now, with Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating, if this bill passes, this information will be on the menu board. You will see Big Mac: \$4.59, 450 calories. It's already happening throughout the United States. It's time Ontario follows suit.

#### ROTARY CLUBS

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I rise today in the House to recognize the outstanding efforts of the Rotary Clubs of Oakville. The objective of each Rotary Club is to foster the ideal of service. In Oakville, the Rotary Clubs are doing that by continuing to develop the very solid foundation of serving the local community.

The Rotary Club of Oakville is involved in many major local projects, including Easter Seals, Ian Anderson House, the Salvation Army and many others. They also support several international projects, such as Water for Humanity, Sleeping Children Around the World and, of course, polio eradication.

The Rotary Club of Oakville-Trafalgar helps with the development of our community's youth through programs such as the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, bursary programs and the Oakville Youth Development Centre.

The Rotary Club of Oakville West has showcased itself as being one of the most active and progressive clubs. The club has spearheaded important projects both locally and internationally, including the Oakville Awards for Business Excellence, which was recently held for the 18th year.

1310

On behalf of the citizens of Oakville, I'd like to thank all the Rotary Clubs in Oakville for what they do, and thank their members personally for setting an example through their contributions to community service that should be emulated by us all.

#### FOOD LITERACY

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize the Canadian Beverage Association. Their

members directly employ almost 5,000 people here in Ontario at their 40 plants, distributions centres and offices, as well as thousands more indirectly. They are an important part of our provincial economy.

Today, the Canadian Beverage Association is here to share the steps they are taking to increase nutritional knowledge and to make nutritional information easier to understand through their Clear on Calories initiative. Just this weekend I saw a new Coca-Cola commercial raising awareness about the need to address obesity and to improve the health of our families. I want to commend them for the steps that they are taking.

We believe that increasing food literacy is an important part of helping our children understand food choices so they can create a healthy and balanced diet. It teaches them where our food comes from, what goes into it, and it helps them become healthy adults. That's why we included a commitment to food literacy in our agriculture, food and rural affairs white paper, Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario, and it is why we were disappointed that it wasn't in the Local Food Act.

Our PC education critic will be talking more about food literacy later this afternoon. I hope that all members of the Legislature will support our efforts on food literacy and that they will take some time to meet with the Canadian Beverage Association today or drop in and talk to them this evening and learn more about the jobs they create and the good work they do to increase nutrition awareness.

#### IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** April 20 to 27 marked Immunization Awareness Week in Canada, which is designed to raise awareness of one of the most important and cost-effective public health innovations. Immunization Awareness Week in Canada coincides with World Immunization Week and Vaccination Week in the Americas.

This is a very good time for the people of Ontario to talk to their primary care provider about making sure their vaccinations are up to date. Now that effective vaccines are widely available, children in Ontario no longer suffer from many vaccine-preventable diseases like they did in the past.

I'm proud to say that we have a comprehensive, publicly funded immunization program that is the envy of many jurisdictions. Since 2003, for example, we have made continuous improvements to Ontario's immunization programs by adding new vaccines; our government has expanded the province's immunization program to include 21 vaccines protecting against 16 diseases; and for many years now we have provided the seasonal influenza vaccine free of charge under the Universal Influenza Immunization Program.

This year, we introduced another innovation by giving the people of Ontario even easier access to the flu shot by authorizing pharmacists to administer the flu shot to

increase access to the vaccine, improve people's health and save money for the health care system.

Because immunization prevents illnesses, it reduces the need for physician's visits, hospitalizations, drug treatments and public health efforts to manage disease outbreaks. As we know, one of the best and most proven ways to avoid many serious illnesses is with a simple vaccination.

So, Speaker, let's be reminded of the remarkable benefits of immunization for helping to keep the people of Ontario healthy.

#### ROAD MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** The Canadian Automobile Association, or as we know it, the CAA, is the leading advocate for overall road safety in Ontario. As CAA's South Central Ontario branch is located in the heart of Thornhill, I wish to acknowledge the launch of their 10th annual Worst Roads campaign—it'd be a lot of fun, but it actually works and it's quite serious and gets a lot of attention, as we all know.

Our province faces drastic changes in weather, temperature, sometimes even within the very same day. Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians alike know all too well that our climate is the prime culprit for creating potholes and deteriorating our roads. CAA's campaign provides Ontarians with an opportunity to vote on their choice of the worst road title.

Last year, six out of the 10 worst roads were in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, or GTHA, all within about 60 kilometres of where I'm standing right now. The results of the vote are instrumental in assisting elected representatives at the municipal and provincial levels to understand which areas of Ontario need to be prioritized and targeted. Improvements have been made because of CAA's efforts. Also informative in nature, the campaign provides information for drivers about how they can report a pothole or submit a damage claim.

CAA is an excellent example of how organizations can work together with people to assist and inform government. I thank them for their leadership.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. That ends the member statements.

#### DOUG ROLLINS

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe we have unanimous consent so that the House and all parties may make a tribute to Doug Rollins, who was an MPP in this House from 1995 to 1999.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Attorney General is seeking unanimous consent to do this. Do we have an agreement for consent? Agreed.

The member from Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'm glad to rise today on behalf of Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats to talk about

the time that Doug Rollins was amongst us here in the Legislature.

Listen, I remember that time well. I went from being a very comfortable member in government with plenty of us on that side of the House to being usurped by the Conservatives who came in with Mike Harris to oust us out.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I would not applaud to that.

Doug was one of the guys who came in at the time of Mike Harris's election victory in 1995, and he came to this Legislature and served with us for that first term of the Harris government.

What I remember of Doug is that he was a pretty easy guy to get along with. He was not the type of guy to get in your face as far as sometimes being the confrontational type of politician that you see here at times, not always, but at times. He was one of those fellas that liked to try to find a way to be able to talk to people straight but at the same time not do it in a way that, quite frankly, ran that negative kind of politics thing. He was that type of fellow. Just in my time that he was here, I remember him for that. I sat with him on committee on a couple of occasions and obviously sat with him in the House. He leaves me with good impressions, not a bad impression, of the time that he was here. Anybody who can serve in this place for one term and leave and other members say, "You know what? I can't think of one bad thing that person did"—that is a testament to the individual themselves. For that, I thank him.

I also note that Doug, like I, is a grandfather. I didn't understand back then because I wasn't a granddad and didn't understand what being a granddad was all about. He obviously cared a lot for his family. I was not at the funeral, but I had a chance—I heard about it and read about it. It was very well attended by people of the community. What was really of note was the connection to the family. Doug was one of those guys who understood you may be all mighty, get elected and be one of those highfalutin politicians, but at the end of the day it's about what happens back home and what happens to your family because, unfortunately, as Doug found out at age 74, when you go the only people there are your family. Obviously, Doug understood that way before he got to this place and remembered it when he got here. It was important that he never forget where he came from, not only when it came to his constituents, but most importantly, that he didn't forget his family. That's something that all of us strive very hard to do, and with the hustle and bustle of what we do it is sometimes difficult to do, but Doug always managed to find that.

He comes from a part of the province where being a Tory was not all that difficult. I will only put it that way. But in conversations with other members that I talked to earlier today to get a sense of the local politics, he was known as the Tory riding association. He was the guy in the community, if you wanted to know what was going on with PCs in that part of the world, in the Quinte part of the world, Doug was the guy who had been involved



for a long time. Not surprisingly, he finally decided that he wanted to run for the nomination and got elected in that big sweep of 1995 when Mike Harris came in.

Now, I'm sure he had to be upset with redistribution, as I was, because redistribution wasn't exactly fair to Doug. Doug was in a situation, unfortunately, that the riding boundaries changed in such a way that made it difficult for him, within the process, to be able to get the nomination when he tried to run again. I guess we share that, Doug and I. I was never a fan of redistribution. I always thought that having more members in the Legislature is a good thing. Why? Because it does allow our committee structure to work more properly. The least amount of members we have here, I think, the harder it is for us to do our work collectively as members on committee. Our responsibilities there, I think, are paramount to what we do in this Legislature.

I just want to say to the family who is here today, thank you for sharing your father, your grandfather, your husband with us. To the people that knew Doug well, I'm sure it is never, never an easy thing to go through, but you were lucky to have had him in your lives. We are lucky to have shared him, and we say to you, your family: Congratulations and thank you. He was a great man, and we grieve for your loss.

1320

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I, too, would, first of all, like to welcome his widow, Cheryl, and his daughters Michele and Melissa, as well as their grandchildren. I'm not sure how many grandchildren are here today, but I know that he had four grandchildren: Avery, Paige, Reese and Ayden.

Yes, I, too, remember June 1995, when the Harris sweep took place, because I was elected at the same time as Doug Rollins. Of course, he represented the Quinte and Belleville area basically, and I represented the Kingston area. There's something about politics in eastern Ontario. You're quite correct; it tends to be Tory politics—not everywhere, but in most parts of eastern Ontario. But we also play our politics, I think, a little bit more subdued than many other parts of the province. I think there's a respect amongst politicians. We may not always see the world the same way, but we certainly always acknowledge politicians and work with them, no matter what political stripe, once the election is over and done with.

I was very much taken by some of the comments that were made about Doug in the Belleville Intelligencer at the time of his death last November, because this is the way I knew Doug as well. It states, for example, that, "Doug Rollins was a straight shooter. What you saw was what you got." That was said by Todd Smith, who will be speaking a little bit later on today.

Also, someone else said, "I remembered him as a truth teller. He always had an opinion. We agreed to disagree, always with respect for each other."

"He'd always say it like it is, and you like that in a person, especially someone in politics. He was never afraid to say how he felt." That was said by John

Williams, who is now the mayor of Quinte West but against whom Doug actually ran for the nomination—I guess it would have been in about 2003. But that's the kind of respect that he had in the community, even from his opponents from within or other parties as well, and that's the way I remember Doug here.

I can remember that we didn't always agree with one another. I sat over there and he sat on this side. As a matter of fact, I think he sat in the rump most of the time. There were so many Tories at the time, they couldn't all sit on one side; they had to bend over to the other side there. But we'd chat with one another during receptions. Of course, there's always this healthy tension between Kingston and Belleville anyway, whether you're talking about the sports scene, economic development or whatever, and that's good for our part of the province. He spoke passionately about the Belleville area and eastern Ontario in general.

The other thing that's interesting about Doug, and what I remember of him as well, is that we all have careers before we come to this place. Doug, for many, many years, ran a service station on Bridge Street in Belleville. As a matter of fact—now, I was able to pick this up, and I'm not sure whether I got this out of his maiden speech that he gave during the 1995 fall season, but this was what he said about himself, Speaker.

He said, "I started with Shell Oil back in 1962. I'm one of the first persons to have driven a pup truck in Ontario. It was in 1963 or 1964 that this Legislature passed legislation to allow vehicles of over 47 feet in length." They were big trucks in those days. "Shell had bought a truck from British Columbia and parked it at the Lakehead. It was the first pup truck. When that legislation was passed and became law, they put the licence plates in my suitcase, flew me up to the Lakehead, and I brought back that truck. That was the very first one to my knowledge that was driven in the province of Ontario, particularly with licence plates on it."

That's the kind of person Doug was. He was an individual—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Legal plates.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Legal plates, yes.

He was an individual you could share a laugh with, share a serious discussion with, who truly felt very strongly about his community. After he was no longer in this place, he twice tried to represent the riding again. I think he ran against the current mayor of Belleville in 2006 and lost to Neil Ellis, but then I understand that in the 2010 election he became a strong supporter of Neil Ellis. That really tells me a lot about a person: that you could want the same position as someone else, recognize the good qualities of the other person once that person is in that position, and then support that person.

Doug Rollins was a guy who was meant for this place. He spoke passionately. I believe that during one of the situations when gas prices were going up—he may have even been one of the three gas commissioners; I can remember the guys in trench coats; some of my Tory friends will remember this. Doug was very proud of that,

because he had been in the gasoline business and the service station business his entire life.

The fact that so many folks came out to his funeral at the Bridge Street United Church in November of this year truly shows you that he meant a lot to the community; he meant a lot to his family. We're all the better for the fact he was here. I'd like to thank his family very much on behalf of the Premier, Kathleen Wynne, and the government of Ontario, for Doug's service to this place, and we offer to you our sincerest condolences. We will all have fond remembrances of Doug Rollins.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward–Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you as well to the member from Timmins–James Bay and also the Attorney General for your comments about my dear friend Doug Rollins. You're very accurate in the fact he was very proud of his role as one of those gas commissioners. They were affectionately known as the "gas busters." We actually used to, when I was in my radio career, have Doug on from time to time talking about the gas prices, playing the Ghost Busters theme song behind. Doug was very proud of that. Usually we would ring him up here at 6:05 in the morning, just after I read the 6 o'clock news. Doug would be on the air and he would be talking about how much gas prices were going to go up that day and how they shouldn't be going up that much. We should actually think about bringing the gas busters back here at this time, because I think back then prices were well under \$1. Now, of course, they're a lot more than that, that's for sure.

I would also really like to welcome Cheryl, who's become a friend of mine, and Cheryl, of course, is Doug's wife. She's been a great friend and a great supporter, not just here in this place or in my endeavours to come to this place, but back when I used to play first base for the Belleville Labatt Nationals, the senior A baseball team in Belleville. Cheryl and Doug would always be behind the backstop at Rotary Park in Belleville. You could always hear Doug Rollins, and every pitcher that came to town from another city knew who Doug Rollins was because he was all over them.

I'd also really like to welcome Michele as well, and her husband Trevor Clarke. They came in from Belleville today, and Melissa and Craig MacIntyre, who live here in Toronto, and of course the grandkids as well, Avery and Paige are here. It's so nice to see you. I know that Rusty, Doug's brother, also wishes that he could be here today. Rusty and Gail are watching down in the Hamilton area, I'm sure, and wishing that they could be here today, but health reasons are keeping Rusty from being here at Queen's Park today.

The first picture I have on record of ever being involved on this side of the political landscape, not holding the microphone and interviewing one of you guys, was actually the day that I decided that I was going to run for the Progressive Conservative Party in the last election. It was a warm, sunny day, June 16, 2011, down at Meyers

Pier in Belleville. The picture that appeared in the Belleville Intelligencer the next day was me standing by the Bay of Quinte and talking to Doug Rollins.

Doug really was the Progressive Conservative Association, or the face of the Progressive Conservative Party in the Quinte region. As the Attorney General points out, there was no question about that. If you wanted to talk to an influential Tory, Doug was going to make it happen. He was just an outstanding guy, and we spent a lot of time together during that campaign. Doug was the former member of the old riding of Quinte, which unfortunately no longer exists anymore, but after redistribution it could be back, known as the Bay of Quinte. I don't stand here particularly to talk as much about his political career but the Doug Rollins who was my friend, who I got to know over the last 20 years extremely well.

It really is, as the Attorney General pointed out, hard to think that this chamber has ever known anybody that was as straight a shooter as Doug Rollins was, and that was my comment to the Intelligencer as well. He never hesitated to speak his mind. He often would use blunt and very colourful language when he was speaking about his beliefs as well, so he left no question as to where he stood on any issue. You always knew what he believed in, and he would look you square in the eye and tell you what he believed while he was doing it. I think a lot of people had a lot of trust in Doug Rollins because he would do just that.

Doug was one of those common sense revolutionaries, as we've heard, who came in here in 1995. He always spoke proudly about serving here at Queen's Park and being a member of the Mike Harris team here at Queen's Park. When he talked about Queen's Park, Doug always did the same thing. He would say, "When we came here in 1995, we did exactly what we said we were going to do." He was very proud of that because that's the kind of character that he had as a person as well.

1330

Everyone out there has their favourite Doug Rollins stories; I have many, but it happens to be true here—for those of you who have served at Queen's Park, as well, everybody has memories of Doug walking the halls here at Queen's Park or down at a reception in the legislative dining room. When Doug passed away suddenly, my colleague from Haldimand–Norfolk, Toby Barrett, told me his favourite Doug Rollins story. It was actually during one of those famous teacher protests from the 1990s on the south lawn here.

Doug, our neighbouring MPP Gary Fox and a number of members of the PC caucus were out there on a bus. They had been bused in that day from wherever they were, and there was a large mob of teachers that were out there protesting, not dissimilar to the ones that we saw in September of this past year. Anyone who knew Doug knew how big a man he was; he was actually a pretty good football player in his day, too. He actually won, in 1959, the Ontario and Canadian championships for football with the University of Guelph, so he was a big, strong boy. Doug just said to Toby Barrett and the others



that were on the bus that day, “Don’t worry, boys. I’ll get you in the building.” He took his briefcase, he put it in front of him and he cleared a path right through to the front doors at Queen’s Park. It was almost as if he was a wedge that was driving his way through the mob so that all of his other colleagues could get through safely.

I’ll personally never forget, during the election campaign, bombing down the Shannonville gravel road. We were driving along in my change car at the time, and Doug was driving, because nobody knew his way around Hastings county as well as Doug Rollins did. Often Doug would be doing well in excess of the speed limit, and he would be telling you stories about all of the different businesses, the different houses and those who occupied them, the fact that there used to be a rail line that used to go from Thurlow to Havelock on Friday nights, and all of the great stories about his childhood growing up in Hastings county.

The only thing really bigger than Doug’s personality was his heart. Anyone who knew him knew that, too. In 1995, Doug fought a real battle, as the Attorney General says, with Belleville’s mayor at the time, George Zegouras, to win his seat here in the Legislature. It was a highly contested battle in 1995, and I can tell you that last year George Zegouras fell ill. He was nearing the end of his life, and the first person to call me and tell me about that was Doug Rollins. Doug was wondering if there was anything that I could do in my position as the new MPP to ensure that Mr. Zegouras was moved from a hospital bed in Kingston so that he could be close to his family in Belleville.

He really did care. He was a very caring individual, and I think that story there says a lot about Doug Rollins as well. They were two of the giants of 1995; Zegouras made a comeback later and became mayor of Belleville again. But unfortunately, we lost those two influential people in Belleville and our greater Quinte area last year as both of them passed away. The community really is poorer for it, because both of them were characters and both of them had so much integrity. It was a great loss for our area.

The spirit does live on, though, in the Quinte region. It’s great to have Cheryl and his daughters, who are here today. Every time I tell a Doug Rollins story, and there are many of them out there to tell, you kind of have to smile and laugh, because there are some real funny stories about Doug; many of them are probably not appropriate to tell in this place, but he was a real character.

He really did love the time that he spent here. Sometimes when I look into the back rows or in the rump here, I think about the conversations that must have gone on with people like Doug Rollins, Gary Fox and Doug Galt, and how they would be spending time heckling Dalton McGuinty and other members—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Todd Smith:** —and quite possibly the Attorney General as well, and how Gary Stewart was probably chiming in there from time to time too. But from the day

he walked onto this floor for the first time and then the last time he walked off, Doug definitely was a servant of the people of Quinte, and he loved every minute of it. Our area is poorer for his loss. He will be missed.

Thank you all for your comments here this afternoon, and thank you, Speaker, for allowing us the time to do that. All the best to the Rollins family.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I want to thank all members for their very kind and heartfelt comments, and I would like to offer the family, on behalf of all elected members and the entire staff of the Legislature here at Queen’s Park, our heartfelt prayers and our deepest sympathies. As is the tradition, the family will receive a copy of Hansard and a DVD of what was said today on behalf of Doug.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### HEALTHY DECISIONS FOR HEALTHY EATING ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 FAVORISANT DES CHOIX SAINS POUR UNE ALIMENTATION SAINE

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 59, An Act to amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act to require food service premises to provide nutritional information / *Projet de loi 59, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection et la promotion de la santé pour obliger les lieux de restauration à indiquer l’information nutritionnelle.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement, please.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating is a bill that amends the Health Promotion and Protection Act to require all persons who own or operate a food service premise that is part of a chain of food service premises with a minimum of five locations in Ontario and a gross annual revenue of over \$5 million to do the following three things:

- (1) to display the number of calories contained in the food or drinks that are sold or served;
- (2) to make available brochures that provide nutritional information for the food and drink items sold or served;
- (3) to indicate the high and very high sodium content food or drinks that are sold or served.

The bill makes it an offence to contravene these requirements and imposes a fine for the first, second and subsequent offences.

WIRELESS SERVICES  
AGREEMENTS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LES CONVENTIONS  
DE SERVICES SANS FIL

Ms. MacCharles moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to strengthen consumer protection with respect to consumer agreements relating to wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, smart phone or any other similar mobile device / *Projet de loi 60, Loi visant à mieux protéger les consommateurs en ce qui concerne les conventions de consommation portant sur les services sans fil accessibles au moyen d'un téléphone cellulaire, d'un téléphone intelligent ou de tout autre appareil mobile semblable.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'll make my statement during ministerial statements.

1340

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** On April 18, I rose in this House to announce how our government, in keeping with the commitments made in the throne speech, would continue to pursue reforms that would provide stronger consumer protection for the people of Ontario. At that time, I introduced legislation that would protect consumers against the aggressive tactics of door-to-door water heater salespersons and the abusive practices of some companies offering debt settlement services. The same legislation would provide consumers with more transparency and stronger protections in real estate transactions, and also provide them with more choice in the services they pay for when buying or selling a home.

I rise in the House again today to announce our latest commitment to strengthen consumer protection for the people of Ontario. Today, we are introducing the Wireless Services Agreements Act, 2013. This bill would protect consumers who enter into agreements with suppliers of wireless services accessed from a cellular phone, a smart phone, or any other similar mobile device. This bill, if passed, would have a direct impact on the daily lives of more than three quarters of the people of Ontario. That's because approximately eight out of 10 families subscribe to wireless services.

The spectrum of users is wide and covers literally everyone: parents, children, grandparents, students, commuters and workers. Many of us use wireless services daily in many ways: for work, talking, texting, playing games, making plans, responding to emergencies, watch-

ing videos, sending email, or sharing information with friends through social media.

Almost everyone uses cellphones; some, I would say, use more than one. Very few of us, though, understand the user agreements that come with them—the contracts that everybody signs. Many of us have opened our cellphone bills and simply do not understand the details related to costs and the other provisions that are contained in these contracts. We are introducing this bill to help make things clear—clear about cellphone contracts and the services consumers sign up for, and what those services cost.

We know that complaints about wireless billing are increasing year after year. When the federal Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services recently appeared before a hearing of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, or the CRTC, to discuss the possibility of a national code for wireless services providers, he noted a 250% rise in complaints over the past four years, with wireless sector complaints accounting for more and more of the CRTC's workload.

A recent survey by a social advocacy group called OpenMedia.ca compiled the opinions and complaints of 2,800 cellphone users across Canada and called for an overhaul of the Canadian cellphone market. The survey showed that consumers are unhappy about what they view as restrictive contracts and price gouging.

For our government, what this means is very simple: When it comes to contracts with wireless service providers, we need to protect consumers and increase that protection for the people of Ontario. This bill will give Ontario consumers those protections.

Let me say upfront that this proposed legislation is an improvement on Bill 82, which was introduced last session. The strong consumer protections that were included in Bill 82 are being carried forward in this legislation, and we've added additional protections.

At this point, Speaker, I'd like to acknowledge my colleague the honourable Minister of Natural Resources and MPP for Sault Ste. Marie, David Oraziotti, who has been a very early, persistent and effective champion for consumers on this file. Thank you.

If passed, our bill would help consumers get the services they pay for, and understand what they're getting. It would ensure that consumers receive the following things from their wireless service providers: First, there would be clear, written contracts that spell out which services come with the basic fee and which would result in a higher bill. Second, it would provide for the ability to walk away from a contract any time, with limits on cancellation fees, a hard cap of \$50. Third, there would be the right to sue the provider for three times the amount that the consumer is owed, if the consumer is owed a refund under the legislation and the company refuses to pay for that. And finally, this legislation will provide for all-inclusive pricing.

This legislation is about making sure agreements are clear—clear when it comes to the cost to operate your cellphone every month. Under our proposed legislation,



consumers would receive one contract that spells out the key terms and costs that they've agreed to. It would be clear when it comes to the services you are getting. Companies would have to provide clear information on things such as roaming costs and when they would be incurred, and whether a cellphone is locked and if there's any cost to unlocking it. Service providers would also have to stop billing a customer immediately for a phone once it has been reported lost or stolen, and suppliers would be obligated to disclose the manufacturer's warranty on a phone if the consumer is purchasing supplementary warranty coverage, and to be clear when it comes to renewing, amending or extending the contract you have.

Companies would have to be clear about renewing fixed-term contracts, and they would have to provide detailed information to consumers about that contract. Fixed-term contracts would also be automatically extended on a month-to-month basis once the term is finished so people don't lose their phone number.

Above all, this legislation is about empowering consumers to know their rights when service providers do not follow the rules. This clarity extends to the strong enforcement measures that are included in our proposed legislation.

This proposed cellphone and wireless service legislation is, as I have mentioned, Speaker, part of the larger series of consumer protection measures that we have introduced recently. We believe they all strengthen consumer protection measures, help to build a strong economy, and ensure a fair, safe and informed marketplace.

This government has a responsibility to Ontario consumers and to their families to ensure that the cellphone agreements signed by Ontario individuals and families each year are clear, comprehensive and easy to understand. The approximately 80% of Ontario families who rely on wireless communication in their day-to-day lives are counting on us to get this right.

I call on this House, Speaker, to pass this bill quickly so Ontario residents can get the protection they want and deserve. In the end, we want to help make Ontario families and individuals self-assured when making decisions on their wireless use and, indeed, everything they buy. We want to help them make informed choices, spend wisely and protect their hard-earned money. Confident consumers help build a confident and strong economy, and a stronger economy is definitely something we can all agree on and I believe everyone in this province can support.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** It's always a pleasure to rise in the House to speak on consumer protection. It's also an opportunity to express our concern that this government puts politics and its own internal Liberal squabbles ahead of the interests of Ontario consumers.

Speaker, last session Bill 5 received second reading with all-party support and was referred to the Standing Committee on General Government on December 1, 2011. Had the Liberals not engaged in delaying tactics

and formed committees, the bill could have been examined and enacted by the spring of 2012. Instead, the government is still making media in mid-2013 about an issue that could have been settled 18 months ago.

When Bill 82 had a chance of becoming law, the Liberals chose to prorogue the Legislature and kill an important piece of consumer legislation in order to escape accountability for the scandals.

Context, Speaker, is very important, and when it comes to consumer protection, the Liberals choose to protect their skins first. The Ontario PCs enacted the original Consumer Protection Act, and we remain staunch advocates of the interests of Ontarians.

Most developed countries can be considered today as consumption economies, and one aspect of the transition to a consumption economy is that we stop earning to survive and begin earning in order to enjoy ourselves and provide for ourselves the things and services that were once considered luxuries.

Mobile phones have defined a generation, and smartphones may very well define the next. Data usage is doubling every few months. As smartphones become more advanced, the content designed for them becomes more interactive and heavier, which leads to and sometimes exceeds our limits.

Last year, the minister's predecessor focused on the notion of cell shock, the cold chill running down your spine once you realize your smartphone has exchanged massive amounts of data while you were in the United States or elsewhere abroad. To this minister's credit, the media announcements last week focused less on catchy sound bites but on the real issue of creating an educated and protected consumer in the wireless market.

We need to remain mindful of the upcoming CRTC mandatory code of conduct, which will create a national regulation framework. It's likely this bill will be made redundant by a national regulation even before exiting the committee stage.

**1350**

As I said last year during the debate on the bill's predecessor, Bill 82, the wireless market in Ontario relies on self-regulation by the Canadian Wireless Telecom Association. Other provinces, such as Quebec and Manitoba, have passed legislation imposing certain obligations upon carriers. The most important development in wireless communication legislation is the limit on cancellation charges, with which we wholeheartedly agree. If a company is free to charge the consumer the whole cost of a contract upon cancellation, it becomes an income-guarantee scheme. Some companies have abandoned this approach, such as Rogers in 2011. However, a comprehensive limit is in the consumer's and the industry's best interests.

I look forward to seeing the details of this bill, and I will attend the briefing later this afternoon. As last year, the Ontario PCs will focus on the need for clear language in the legislation as well as in the contract itself. Furthermore, we will ensure that this House is fully informed about the consequences of this bill's provisions and how these may be mitigated if undesirable.

Our greatest concerns last year included the imposition of a mandatory cut-off at the end of a fixed contract, resulting in the consumer's phone number and contract being cancelled overnight. Once the number is deactivated, there is almost no way of recovering its use. We must ensure that no Ontarian is put through this needless aggravation. We are glad to see this change. Contracts that expire must be extendable on a month-to-month basis on the same terms.

I wish the minister the best of luck in having this bill scheduled for second reading during a time as intense as the budget. For the sake of Ontario's consumers, I hope this fourth issue of this wireless bill finally makes it to royal assent and is not just another publicity stunt by the Liberal government. With the parliamentary schedule as it is, I am doubtful that this bill can clear the House before the summer recess—another wasted opportunity. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Responses? The member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the NDP caucus, I am pleased to rise today to speak to this government bill. I think it addresses an issue that has come up in my constituency office and a number of members' offices across this province. It's a live issue that many folks, when dealing with their wireless agreements on their cellphones, are hit with a number of issues they are unaware of due to lack of disclosure and transparency. So I am supportive of the initiative to provide more transparency, more clarity and more protection for consumers. I think that's a good initiative. This is similar to the bill that was introduced before, which we also indicated our support for.

Consumers certainly need protection, and there are certain areas that this bill is addressing that are important to address, particularly when it comes to contracts and the way they are cancelled. Often, constituents and members of the community indicate that they feel trapped by their cellphone bills; they feel trapped by their agreement. They don't know how to get out of it. They feel that it's unfair that to cancel a cellphone agreement, you often have to pay for more than the phone you were given as an inducement in the first place, and that seems absolutely unfair. This bill works toward addressing that.

Also, I think it's quite important to acknowledge that the bill provides a remedy. I think that people need to have a way that they can hold their wireless provider to account, so that they can actually say, "If you don't follow through in providing what the legislation indicates you have to provide, there's a way for me to get some remedy." They can actually take the provider to court.

But there are some difficulties on that point. One is that accessing court to initiate a legal claim is something that's quite difficult, and many people are uncomfortable with that. So I suggest perhaps looking at an alternative mechanism besides having to go to court. That could be difficult, costly and inefficient for some folks, but I do acknowledge that it is a remedy that's available. I acknowledge that.

Another area, though, if we look beyond specifically consumer protection when it comes to transparency in agreements, is that in Canada we are actually paying some of the highest cellphone prices in the world. We are among the highest costs where it comes to cellphones, and I think what we need to do is look at ways to bring those costs down.

More and more we're seeing people transitioning away from land lines to cellphones. That's the reality: that people use their cellphones not only to communicate with one another in terms of placing phone calls and texts but also as a way of accessing the Internet. Internet usage among wireless users is increasing, so we're seeing a trend that more and more people are accessing the Internet with their cellphones.

If that's the case, there's a real access to an important service, which we're seeing in our global age: People who are able to connect to the Internet, who are able to obtain information and resources from the Internet—that's their way of moving ahead with the times, of connecting with this new global age. If our way of connecting with the Internet is through wireless providers and we're paying some of the highest costs in the world, we're creating a barrier that those who are less fortunate, those who are facing socio-economic problems, are having a barrier in their access to the Internet. The Internet is integral in this day and age. It's something that we learn in schools; we have jobs that are integral—their use of the Internet is integral for their employment. So if we create a barrier that for cellphones we're paying the highest prices in the world and the global age is about information and technology, and there's this barrier, we're doing a disservice to people who are less well off in this society.

I think that if we are serious about providing consumer protection, we really have to answer this question: Why are our fees, our prices for cellphones and cellphone plans, the highest in the world, and what can we do to bring that down? That would be a really meaningful way of looking at this issue and addressing it in a meaningful way so that people can actually afford to pay their bills and can afford to have access to, whether it's communication directly on a telephone, or whether it's access to the Internet.

I look forward to learning more about this bill; I understand there's a briefing this afternoon, which I'll be attending to find out more details about it. We're supportive of any initiative that protects consumers, and I think it's an important initiative, but we also have to get to the heart of what we can do to make life more affordable and bring costs down so that families that are already hard hit aren't in a difficult situation.

## PETITIONS

### LAND USE PLANNING

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I have a petition that relates to a private member's bill that I tabled here,



proposing an amendment to the Places to Grow Act and specifically related to the town of Newmarket, but it has application across the province. It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Preserving Existing Communities Act, 2013 proposed by Newmarket-Aurora MPP Frank Klees, that amends the Places to Grow Act, 2005 to provide that a decision made by a municipal council is final and may not be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board if the following conditions are satisfied:

"The decision is to refuse a request to amend the municipality's official plan with respect to land that is designated for one or more of the following: residential uses, mixed uses including residential and parks and open space;

"The requested official plan amendment, if it were approved, would permit an increase in the number of housing units on the land;

"The municipal council has passed a resolution stating that the requested official plan amendment would not be in the best interests of the municipality."

I affix my signature to this petition in support.

#### OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm happy to stand in this House again to bring forward a petition that I've read many times in this House. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, is not allowed to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints against children's aid societies; and

"Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada not allowing their Ombudsman to investigate complaints against children's aid societies; and

"Whereas people who feel they have been wronged by the actions of children's aid societies are left feeling helpless, with nowhere else to turn for help to correct systemic issues;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to grant the Ombudsman the power to investigate children's aid societies."

I couldn't agree with this more, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to affix my name to it and give it to page Victoria to take to the Clerks.

1400

#### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I have a petition from the community of York South-Weston. They're petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas there have been several incidents of violence and crime related to the illegal sale and service of alcohol in our community; and

"Whereas we, as a community, want safety and peace of mind and know that giving law enforcement better tools to combat criminal actions will help meet this goal;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly passes Bill 8, the Liquor Licence Amendment Act (Serving Liquor in Certain Places), 2013, into law."

I agree with this petition, I will sign it and hand it to page Jack.

#### WORKPLACE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas, beginning January 1, 2013, the WSIB was expanded to include groups of employers and principals who had previously been exempt from the WSIB and had private insurance; and

"Whereas this new financial burden does nothing to improve worker safety and only drives up the cost of doing business in Ontario; and

"Whereas the economy of Ontario is struggling and government must assist businesses in every way possible;

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to repeal the statutory obligations created by Bill 119."

I affix my signature in support.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas social assistance benefits in Ontario leave recipients far below the poverty line, struggling to meet the basic costs of living, and without any resources to handle emergencies;

"Whereas the provincial government has announced deep cuts to the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit;

"Whereas this program provides emergency support to help families pay for basic utilities;

"Whereas this program provides options for vulnerable people including women, children and people with disabilities to escape domestic violence and transition to safer housing;

"Whereas the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit is a critical emergency program that helps to prevent homelessness;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario restore full funding for the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit and ensure that it continues to go directly to those who need it."

I support this, I'll sign my name to it and give it to page Simon.

#### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have a petition here for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the tire fee increases.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

"Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

"Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

"Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

"Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs."

I support this petition, affix my signature and send it down with page Ethan.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Petitions? The member for Durham.

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be noticed once in a while.

"Whereas under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08, public health inspectors are required to undertake risk assessments of small drinking water systems;

"Whereas many of these small drinking water systems are located in homes operating bed and breakfasts in rural Ontario;

"Whereas private homes that are the sites of bed and breakfasts already have potable drinking water used by the homeowners and their families every day;

"Whereas many of these bed and breakfasts have established the quality of their drinking water through years of regular testing;

"Whereas these home-based businesses are facing high costs to comply with the new requirements of regulation 319/08;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Health amend Ontario regulation 319/08 to give the testing track record of a small drinking water system greater weight in the risk assessment process. Furthermore we, the undersigned, ask that bed and breakfasts operated within a private home with a drinking water supply meeting all the requirements of a private home not be subject to regulation 319/08."

I'm pleased to sign and support it on behalf of my constituents.

### COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Petitions have come in; there are 1,351 signatures.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the town of Dunnville has a severe drug problem amongst the youth. The local drug dealers are selling drugs to the teenagers with little or no fear of being arrested;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To instruct the Ontario Provincial Police to actively pursue and arrest the local drug dealers;

"To lobby the federal government for stiffer penalties and mandatory jail terms for anyone dealing drugs with no leniency for first offenders."

I agree with these sentiments and affix my signature.

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas a want of confidence motion has been tabled before the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario remains in power only while it has the confidence of the assembly; and

"Whereas the debate of a want of confidence motion requires the consent of all three parties' House leaders; and

"Whereas the recent scandals, including the Ornge air ambulance fiasco, the Mississauga and Oakville power plant cancellation and eHealth have shown Ontarians that the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government cannot be trusted with the administration of our province; and

"Whereas it is evident that the McGuinty-Wynne government has lost the confidence of Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately exercise its prime duty of holding the government accountable and bring a want of confidence motion to debate at the earliest" possible moment.

I agree with this and will be signing it and passing it off to page Anjali.

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas a want of confidence motion has been tabled before the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario remains in power only while it has the confidence of the assembly; and



"Whereas the debate of a want of confidence motion requires the consent of all three parties' House leaders; and

"Whereas the recent scandals, including the Ornge air ambulance fiasco, the Mississauga and Oakville power plant cancellation and eHealth have shown Ontarians that the ... Wynne Liberal government cannot be trusted with the administration of our province; and

"Whereas it is evident that the ... Wynne government has lost the confidence of Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately exercise its prime duty of holding the government accountable and bring a want of confidence motion to debate at the earliest opportunity."

I agree with this. I'm going to sign my name to it and pass it to my page, Ethan.

### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, which I will read.

"Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with developmental and other related disabilities; and

"Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs, developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

"Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

"Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

"Whereas in some cases services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a 'custodial' care arrangement; and

"Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

"Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential supports, day program supports and other programs province-wide;

1410

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have in effect been cut;

"(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that

is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

"(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce;

"(4) To provide adequate new funding to agencies to ensure that the growing number of families on wait lists have access to accommodation supports and day supports and services."

I agree with this petition, I will affix my signature and give it to page Shruti to deliver to the Clerks' desk.

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I support this, will affix my name and send it with page Victoria to the Clerks' desk.

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I have a petition on Drive Clean, and it says:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

"Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions were, in fact, the result of factors other than the Drive Clean program, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

"Whereas from 1999 to 2010 the percentage of vehicles that failed emissions testing under the Drive Clean program steadily declined from 16% to 5%; and

"Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test no longer assesses tailpipe emissions, but instead scans the on-board diagnostics systems of vehicles, which already perform a series of continuous and periodic emissions checks; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

"Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false 'fails,' which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment must take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program."

I agree with this petition, sign it, and I will send it down with Brigid to the table.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time that we have available this afternoon for petitions.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### LOCAL FOOD ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES ALIMENTS LOCAUX

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 25, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 /  
Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant la Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** When this House last debated Bill 36, the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound had just given his presentation. The standing orders now require me to ask for questions and comments with respect to the presentation, the speech that was given by the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Yes, it's a pleasure to respond to the assistant parliamentary critic of this bill on food safety, the Local Food Act, Bill 36.

I'm sure there will be further debates this afternoon, because all of us here respect the work that agriculture does. Certainly in my riding of Durham, agriculture would be the first, if you will, business within the riding. I know many farm and agricultural leadership individuals and I hope to be able to speak this afternoon and recognize some of the contributors.

But really, if you look at the bill—and from what I've heard in the debate, more is being said than is actually being done, and that troubles me. When you have a government that's in such trouble here, that they're

almost—there is a motion that's been tabled. They'd been found earlier this year in contempt and there's a committee dealing with that. Now there's one that there's a lack of confidence as a motion. So, this bill is one more example of more talk than action.

The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, who is, I believe, the critic of agriculture, in his remarks really focused on what was missing in this bill. Again, I hope to have a chance—and hopefully other members will be talking—to put a couple of things on the record.

First, the tire tax has been one of the areas—more red tape. The tire tax on agriculture products is one thing that I know I hear about fairly regularly. I know other members must, or they're just being silent about it. That is another reason to be somewhat cynical or suspicious of the Liberal members who are failing to represent their constituents. I can say that there's more red tape in agriculture today—in the last 10 years, ever since the—the new government is really just the old government. It's unfortunate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I believe that this bill should pass. Everybody is waiting for it. So, in order for the bill to pass, it should go to second reading—there has been much consultation across the province about this bill, and the wonderful Minister of Agriculture is very adamant that she wants this bill to pass. If there is concern, the best way to improve the bill is at committee. So we should bring this bill to committee because, otherwise—it's not in the House debating this and debating other topics than this bill, Bill 36, the Local Food Act.

I would ask the opposition members not to continue to delay this bill and move it to committee. There are people who may want to continue to speak about that bill and we would like to make sure that everybody has their say. Again, if there is a need to improve the bill, let's do it where we can improve the bill, not by debating other matters than the bill that are before the House today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** It's an honour to get up and respond to our honourable member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, who spoke very eloquently about the issues of the Local Food Act and some of the issues that this government—I guess the wonderful wizard of agriculture here talked about listening to the people, listening to the agriculture world; introduced this at a time during Agriculture Week that was already a main week for the agriculture industry—did no consultation, it's obvious, or they would have known that; introduced a tire tax that we heard of just a few weeks ago without any mention to the industry—a huge issue in this province that no other province has to pay. We're talking about fees up over or approaching \$1,000 per tire.

I've already had one supplier in my area who says he'll have to move across the border into Quebec a mile or two miles down the road just because he won't be able to stay in business. I think we need to look at what's good for the industry, and I don't see how some of these



rules that they've put in place or regulations are going to do that.

We talk about the lack of confidence and this want of confidence motion we've put on the floor. I think that just speaks to where we feel this government has got to go. I think it's got to go back and debate in this House whether it really has the confidence of the people of Ontario. We don't see that—and I don't think the members in the NDP—we'll wait to see what they say to that, and whether they have confidence in the leadership on the other side.

1420

So the Local Food Act, or week, is a great initiative, but poor timing and lack of consultation derail the bill that really had some potential. I think if they had talked to the people it's supposed to help, it might have been the first step.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It's a pleasure for me to stand in the House this afternoon to have a little bit of a chance to speak to this particular bill, Bill 36. I've heard some of the debate here today in the Legislature. I think it's extremely important that we move forward with this particular bill and do our best to get this to committee as soon as possible, so that we can have a better opportunity to examine some of the key elements.

I think about the importance of this legislation and how important it is to make sure we have provisions and systems in place to lend support to make sure we can provide as much support to this particular industry here in the province of Ontario. It's certainly important to the people in my community. Although I do represent the suburban riding of Vaughan, and I'm proud to do so, there is a long and proud history in my community of individuals who want to support local food, people who historically—whether it's from where they happen to hail originally, whatever country from around the world they might have come from—recognize the importance of food, the importance of supporting the industry, so that we have access, as we do, to top-quality foods; local foods here in the province of Ontario.

By moving forward with this particular legislation and getting it to committee, where it can be examined in greater detail, we are going to make sure we help underpin and strengthen this particular industry here in the province of Ontario. Under the leadership of our Minister of Agriculture, who also happens to be our Premier, it's really important, as the member from our side just before me said, that we get this bill moved through this House, get it to committee so we can actually take a look at it and, from there, get it implemented, so this particular industry has the kind of support it needs from this Legislature. It's extremely important. It's why I'm proud stand today in this House to lend my support to this legislation in the hope that it will move forward as expeditiously as possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time for questions and comments. We return to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for his reply.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you to the member from Durham, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and the members from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Vaughan.

I have taken copious notes on my little yellow pad that my colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings really likes. I think the biggest concern I have with this bill, and tried to articulate in my original speech, is that there's nothing concrete here. This is another fluff, and perhaps that's because we have a part-time agriculture minister who's trying to run through policy to do this.

Speaker, I come from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, which is the beef capital of Ontario and Canada. We're very proud, and, as I said in this House the last time, if agriculture in our province is doing well, the rest of the economy is doing well. If this bill had addressed things like cutting red tape and lowering electricity costs, which have tripled under this government in nine years; if they'd reduced the debt so there was actually money going into programs and services for people; if they'd stop wasting money on the gas plants; if they had actually set some concrete goals—if they had said, "You shall," and, "You will," as opposed to, "We may," and, "We might"—we could have definitely got more excited about this.

One of my colleagues talked about the Ontario Tire Stewardship. It's interesting that they want to have this fluff bill and say, "We may do this," and it all sounds good in a sound bite. But they raised fees for some of these farmers from \$59 a tractor tire to above \$1,000 per tractor. Well, how is that helping that farmer produce more food for all the great citizens of Ontario?

Speaker, agriculture is absolutely critical to our economy. I talked in this House—they could put \$25 million to totally rejuvenate the apple industry that could provide every single apple we need in this province over a seven-year period. But I didn't hear any of that in there. I haven't heard them doing anything in a productive manner. If they had had some of those types of things, we as a caucus would probably step up and say, "Absolutely, we'll support this."

At the end of the day, more fluff, more red tape, more hot air. What we need is action from this government, particularly in the area of agriculture. How about a full-time minister to really drive this home?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I find it interesting that we're just now putting into legislation the importance of supporting and promoting local food. The designation of a Local Food Week in October is a start, but there's a long way to go. We need to find, create and promote "grow local" right from the start, right from the seeds and from the seedlings which should be locally sourced. The fertilizers and other growing materials must be locally sourced. The farmers should be able to certify on their products that they are 100% local. They should be able to put on the labels that the produce is 100% Ontario grown.

In my riding, we have E.D. Smith jams, but with the fall of the soft-fruit market and the closure of our local

processing plants, not all the ingredients are locally grown. Not only is E.D. Smith a local business in my riding, but it was the place where I began my adult working life. It provided work for the growers, processors, transportation sector and local guys like me. Some employees were even able to ride their bikes to work. It was a win-win situation for everyone. But many of our local Niagara growers have gone, and I would like to see an active program to bring back those agricultural businesses, those jobs and that good, locally grown food.

Also in my riding, we're lucky that we still have a good grower of soft fruit and great grapes that produce terrific wines, and that would be Puddicombe farms. We also get excellent homemade bakery products at Puddicombe. How many Ontarians can still do that and say that? Not many.

In my annual newsletter and calendar, I encourage my constituents to buy local and support our local businesses, but we all need to do more; for example, making our publicly owned spaces freely available to farmers to sell their locally grown produce, and partnering with even more farmers to come even more frequently into the cities to sell their produce directly to the public.

But we really have to start where we can have the greatest long-term impact, and that's in our schools, right from the food available in the cafeteria—yes, in the cafeteria—not food vending machines. Good grief, we should have started that a long time ago with our elementary school kids, who we should be teaching where good food comes from and what can grow in their province. Kids today are very aware and starting school even earlier, so we have a terrific opportunity to get the local food language and knowledge to them much sooner than we do now. Not only will they understand the value of locally produced food, but they'll also learn about their environmental footprint and how locally grown foods can reduce that. We'll have a great learning tool to teach the negative impact the importation of foreign food has on our environment. But sadly, all of this is way far ahead of this bill before us this afternoon.

This bill establishes a Local Food Week. It signals that local food is a provincial priority, and it provides the first step in what is intended to be an ongoing action to support local food. The legislation is intended to raise awareness and to support collaboration with the sector, encouraging the development of new markets for local food. But why do that only in the fall? They can do it in the spring as well—in growing season—to bring awareness of the spring harvests like strawberries and of what we plant in the spring and how much of that local food is within the Ontario lineage.

I'd like to make a suggestion on how we can get a good start on helping with new markets. During a visit to my riding in September, a person stayed at a local hotel which provided breakfast each morning. The guest noticed that the fruit of choice was bananas and spoke to the manager about replacing it with locally grown, in-season soft fruit. The response was a bit of a tongue-lashing about how that chain supports local businesses.

Realizing that this was a lost cause at the local level, the guest contacted the Canadian head office in Oakville to explain the problem and ask how the request for local fruit could be heard and possibly result in some changes with this chain. It was a bit of a struggle to say the least, but with perseverance, they got a commitment to move the request up the line to a decision-maker in the organization. This should have been done through an active marketing program of this government, encouraging local produce in all settings, especially those in my riding and the Niagara region—hotbeds of local fruit production. But it should even be more proactive than that.

A woman who is a strong advocate of local produce tells me that she heads into the grocery stores—Canadian-owned ones and her favourite ones—and demands to know where the locally grown produce is located. Inevitably, it results in head-scratching and her pushing to speak to someone who can answer her questions. She often gets referred up the chain and occasionally finds tables and bins with signs indicating they are Ontario produce. But that's not good enough for her. She pushes further, saying that she wants our local produce to be at the front of the store, the first food bins available to customers and clearly labelled as local, Ontario-grown produce.

1430

Even at that, it's not enough to just have it in the store; it needs to be front and centre, highlighted to be sure that customers have a choice but that they see our local produce first.

This bill will establish consultations with stakeholders, develop voluntary local food goals and targets, and provide ministerial ability to establish goals for the sector and targets for specific public sector partners. It establishes ministerial responsibility for stakeholder consultation and the assembling of information to help create the goals and targets and to determine the success of the program. The bill will require the ministry to publish a summary of provincial local food initiatives and the successes and innovations in the broader public sector.

While this is all under way, I'd like to see something more proactive and immediate, like the continuation of the program that Speaker Peters implemented here at the Legislative Assembly. We have annual tastings to determine which local craft brew and local wine will be served at this assembly, and food in the dining room is, to the greatest degree possible, locally sourced. This should be expanded across the public sector, requiring that any food outlet must first find locally grown food to be sold or served, and then requiring their suppliers searching out and buying Ontario products to be the major items in their stock. But without a strong piece of legislation that requires a focus on buying locally produced foods, we can only hope for the benevolence of our suppliers and sellers.

Last Friday I read our e-copy of the Greenbelt Fund Green Papers, which directly addresses the issue of how to get buy-in on ensuring that we source local food. It doesn't go to our stakeholders; it goes to our staff. The



focus of this edition was on engaging the staff who will be responsible for implementing any local food programs. The assumption is, of course, that a well-planned local food program has already been implemented.

Let me quote from the green papers, April 2013, volume 6: "People: Attitudes and Beliefs.

"The majority of broader public sector ... institutions are large organizations, and making organizational change in one area can affect the jobs of many people. As such, moving forward on changes without broad support from relevant staff members can lead to a myriad of setbacks. For this reason, it is important to pay attention to the attitudes and beliefs of all involved staff.

"When making changes to the food purchasing process, the challenge public institutions face is that they tend to involve a long list of staff members that play a role in this process: There are those that are directly involved such as line staff, chefs, purchasers, food service managers, directors, and other senior level staff, and there are also those staff members that are indirectly involved such as procurement managers, finance staff, administrative support staff, other departmental heads and senior management, and, of course, the board of directors. Any one person on this long line of those directly and indirectly affected can stymie institutional change. It is therefore of utmost importance that relevant staff is engaged when initiating change."

In the public service, we need to have firm legislation, regulations, guidelines and practices to ensure that we are leading the way by example. To do this, we need to rework this legislation to be prescriptive about local food, not just about Local Food Week.

Some of the things that we must do to ensure that we are actually leading the way in supporting local food are to define what is "local," and that should be that the majority of local products must be processed in Ontario and that at least 80% of the direct costs of production are returned to the Ontario economy. No growing here for processing in another province or country; keep jobs related to Ontario produce right here in Ontario.

There should be goals for every ministry to meet in food procurement. Each ministry should be required to report annually on their successes and failures in this area.

Establish a definition for "local organic" and "local sustainable" food. This would give the advantage to large and small producers, who are most likely to produce local organic or local food.

Speaker, I could go on for quite a while here, but this is certainly a win-win: buying local. It keeps our people employed, it gives initiative to our younger people to get involved in the agricultural business as well as the food business, and it certainly helps to stimulate our economy. It helps put people back to eating good food. We're not quite sure sometimes of what we import, where it has been, how long it has been there and how long it takes to get there. But when you're buying from the farmer down the road, you know you're getting a good product and a safe product.

I encourage this government to go a lot deeper into this than just having a food week.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm pleased to rise and to compliment my Hamilton colleague, the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek. It was a wonderful presentation. He touched on many very important points that we agree with, and that's why we want to get this bill to committee so we can do what's right.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I rise and I'm happy to rise to speak to the comments made by the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek and the short and brief comments from our minister across.

The local wine and food initiatives that this House has taken are very important—more than the food that we have access to here, but to the principle of what we're trying to do. In the previous session, that was done, where we of the Legislature had access to food that we normally wouldn't have. We'd like to see more of this go on.

There's an opportunity with this bill to do consultation with the local stakeholders. We see that that wasn't done. We're hoping that during committee we could maybe have some of that done. We have many issues where the farmers in my area are talking about some of the issues that their neighbours in Quebec don't have. We're very close to Quebec—we have a lot of friends and relatives in Quebec—and we see some of the benefits they have. They have a strong agriculture voice that the province listens to down there. Things like energy are not a problem down there; they have some of the lowest rates. They used to be higher than ours, but we've overcome them in the scale, for sure. Things like quality of programs for them—they're very involved with the stakeholders before they pass legislation, something we don't see here.

I think we're going to have to start moving towards having discussions and trying to get the best legislation we can, having legislation that means something other than a feel-good bill here that really just replaces a week we already had dedicated to the ministry.

It's interesting to hear the honourable member from Hamilton speak up on this issue, and I commend him for his initiative.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to join the debate and follow the comments of my colleague from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek. I hope the government side is listening, because we've said quite clearly on this side of the House that this is an issue that's extremely important: the issue of local food, of a more sustainable food system. Those are points that the member was making.

In addition, the issue of food generally has to come to the forefront here. But some of the things that my colleague was saying here—I think they should be in-

cluded in a bill, because right now, this bill is very empty. It just has the week designated, but it doesn't really put anything in the bill that will actually help meet the goals of the bill. If we're going to actually educate the province about the importance of a more sustainable food system, how are we going to do that?

I think your suggestion about bringing this education into our public school system makes very good sense to me. I spend a lot of time speaking to students in my riding of Davenport, and they get it. They get it far more, I think, than the older generation when it comes to the environment, and they actually get quite excited when we talk about food and about growing food on the school grounds. It's something that they want to do, and they want support from the government to be able to do that, but right now they don't have that support. I think that's something we should consider.

Another positive suggestion, I think, which is very obvious—it's something we've said repeatedly—is around actually putting a local procurement policy into our public service so that public agencies are actually supporting local farmers.

There is so much here that's missing from this bill. It doesn't mention anything about different kinds of farming around organic farming or around sustainable farming. If you asked people, if you spent the time to go out to speak to people, people in Kitchener–Waterloo and in Davenport want to talk about backyard farming, about backyard chickens. I hope that this government will listen to the people of Ontario when it comes to this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments? The member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

1440

**Interjection:** Oh, no.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I hear a lot of "oh no's" on the other side.

I'd like to thank the member from Hamilton–Stoney Creek for his always-positive remarks in the House here, and the members from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Davenport.

The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry just mentioned the principle about what they're trying to do. Mr. Speaker, what they're trying to do is filibuster. They're trying to delay another good piece of legislation, like every other good piece of legislation in this House. That party—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I thought I heard an unparliamentary remark. I would ask the member for Leeds–Grenville to withdraw.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. I return to the member for his response.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's a good thing I don't listen to their heckling, Mr. Speaker. But that party is all talk, no action. Let's take some action. Let's get this to committee and let's move this bill forward like the stakeholders want.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our time for questions and comments. I now return to the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek for his reply.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I thank the members for their comments. They didn't use all their time—maybe half their time—so I guess the content of what I said may or may not have sunk in. They were very limited on their responses, I might add, but I certainly hope they were listening. If they'd like a copy of this, I'd be happy to supply them with a copy so they can get the real content here and maybe absorb it. It would be good.

I really believe that it's great to have a designated food week, and that's good, but there certainly has to be content; there has to be substance behind it. There actually has to be something done to make it worthwhile calling it "food week." I'm sure the food producers and all the agricultural people would like to see some content in here that would promote their products, would give them access to more markets, would allow them to have a better position in the grocery stores so that people can recognize homegrown food as opposed to imported food. I certainly think that these things could easily be done—the same as the wine producers, who want better recognition in the LCBO stores. They would like to see bigger areas dedicated to Ontario-grown wine, which, by the way, is another product that has got world recognition for its quality and its availability, which we are not using to the full—how would I put it?—the full extent we could.

I certainly would encourage more and more people around the Legislature to get involved in their local food groups and producers in agriculture, because I'm sure they could put their heads together with their local growers and producers to come up with some good initiatives that could bring good things to Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I'm interested that the government keeps talking about taking this bill to committee. I'd like to point out to the government—I'm sure you're aware of it; perhaps the people listening would be interested—that when a bill goes to committee, they talk about amending the bill and getting it changed and making it better. About 80% of the bills that have gone to committee under this government have no amendments allowed to them. They passed the bill through without amendment, and getting amendments passed in committee is almost impossible. That's why this debate has to continue. That's why we have to point out to the government that this bill is badly, badly flawed.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** It's defective.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** It's defective and flawed. This is the bill we're talking about. "The Minister of Agriculture and Food may establish goals or targets"—certain targets—"to aspire to in respect of local food." We're going to aspire. Talk about a hard-hitting piece of legislation. This is going to turn the world around. We're going to aspire. We could aspire to much greater things than this local food bill.



It's a bill with a really nice title. Let's promote local food. Who wouldn't want to do that? It's like picking up a little pussycat; they're lovely things. It's like motherhood; it's a wonderful thing. Local food: It's a wonderful thing. It's like apple pie; that's a wonderful thing, too.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** You know a thing or two about apple pie.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I know a thing or two about apple pie. Of course, the consultation that this government says they've done on this issue—they've listened to a lot of local food groups and a lot of local farming communities. None of what those local groups have said are in this bill, and that's a shame.

The consultation—and of course in the horse racing business, which also affected agriculture, you didn't do any consultation. Of course, in not doing any, you didn't know anything about the horse racing industry, and you've destroyed that industry. It's going to last for another two or three years, but the breeding industry almost collapsed this year. It probably will collapse next year. Without an active breeding industry, there won't be a horse racing industry in Ontario in three or four years. You have brought that destruction because of your lack of understanding and your lack of consultation and your lack of listening to that consultation, which is exactly what you've done in this bill yet again. We see this constantly in the agricultural community.

I want to say this government seems to have a hate on for the agricultural industry, but that's not true. We know that's not true. It's just that you don't understand it, and you won't go out and ask people who do understand it. And if you do that, you won't believe what they tell you. You can't, because nothing you do helps the agricultural industry.

If you are a fruit and vegetable business, it's a highly intensive management business. One of the things that fruit and vegetable absolutely need is the ability to irrigate crops, especially during drought conditions. Yet if you're on a farm and you would like to put in an irrigation pond, you will probably sell your farm before you will complete that mission. There are regulations and red tape that are yards long and take you years to complete before you can put a pond on your farm. And if you are taking the water from a riverbed that runs through your farm, you can't use the water during a drought, because the Ministry of the Environment says the stream needs the water during a drought and you can't use it to water your crop during a drought. Well, when do you need to irrigate? When it's raining? Not really. That's the kind of thing this government, in its myriads of red tape that it puts up in front of the farming community, doesn't seem to understand.

You have to understand that the people count on you as the government of this province to do the right thing so that they can create an industry that can thrive and survive. That ability is right here in Ontario. We have a tremendous ability in our farming community to thrive, to be prosperous, to create great wealth and hire a lot of people, but you keep getting in the way of that prosperity, and that's a shame.

We see it in the cost of hydro. A lot of electricity is used in agriculture. We see it in tire taxes that come along out of the blue. All of a sudden we're paying \$1,000 for one of those big farm tractor tires, of which some of the largest tractors have four of them. That's \$4,000 in taxes on tractor tires. It's an added cost to people who don't have those kinds of margins in their business to survive. You're throwing up roadblock after roadblock.

We're seeing it in the local abattoirs, of which at one time there used to be one in almost every community. Certainly every riding or county would have had one or two local abattoirs. Well, the red tape and regulation that you've thrown up in their faces over the last 10 years has driven well over 60% of them out of business. That almost makes it impossible for someone to market an animal, or meat, from the farm to the public. You have to go through a major abattoir. When you do that, you know which animal is going in; you just don't know which one's coming back out again. So there's a very high possibility that you're not going to get your animal back out the other end, and that's a shame, because there were some good opportunities in that area.

**1450**

We see what's happening at MPAC today and how that's impacting local farmers. We're not talking about a 10% increase or a 15% increase in land assessments; we're talking about an 80% increase or a 90% increase in assessments, and this government is doing nothing to mitigate that over a period of time. Who can absorb those kinds of increases on an immediate basis? This government is doing nothing about helping farmers survive those 90% increases in land taxes.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Shame. Shame on you.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** It's a shame. It's absolutely a shame.

The fruit and vegetable business in Ontario in the Niagara Escarpment, in the marshlands—Bradford Marsh, Holland Marsh north of the city—Norfolk county, down through Leamington and southwestern Ontario: The economic opportunities in those areas are huge; absolutely huge.

Leamington still has a factory. The Heinz factory in Leamington handles more tomatoes per hour than any other plant in North America during the summer. That includes the paste processing plants in California. There's one in Tracy, California, that's almost as big but not quite. It produces 300,000 or 400,000 tonnes of tomatoes that come from the farms of farmers in that area and are processed through eight or 10 tomato-processing plants down there.

Frozen sweet corn: a huge industry. Probably 12,000 or 15,000 acres of land are used in order to produce sweet corn to go into those plants. Probably 4,000 or 5,000 acres of peas that go into frozen peas that we see—all done in Ontario, all marketed across Canada and into the United States. At one time, we used to go to Europe. Those days are pretty well over now, but on occasion we still send product to Europe.

The opportunity in Ontario to produce those crops in great abundance still exists today, and yet this government keeps getting in the way of that advancement. It's a huge shame. It's a huge lost opportunity. You've got to take the red tape out of the way of farmers so that they can do their job and provide a product that a processor can turn a profit on. That will create economic opportunity in this province beyond your dreams. But you've got to get out of the way, and until you get out of the way, this province is going to continue to struggle in what is one of the most important industries in this province, that being agriculture.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I concur with the member from Halton on many of the things he had concerns about. In the last five and a half years around here, I've seen many bills come forward from the government side that would be one or two pages. What could you possibly put in one or two pages that's going to have a positive impact on this province or the businesses that are affected by that bill?

People want legislation with teeth in it. They want legislation that is really going to have a positive impact on their businesses, on their community, on the jobs in their community and on the businesses in their community. They want real change. They don't want photo ops, lip service to the organization that really wants change and all they're doing is trying to satisfy them for election purposes or for a good media hit. That doesn't make change.

People are looking for legislation with content. They're looking for legislation that really is going to do something. So many times in the last five and a half years I've been frustrated, Speaker, standing up to talk to something that has nothing in it. In fact, we create things to put into it, and usually the government picks up on very little of it. They pretend they're listening. They pretend they care, and they'll say, "Oh, the member's doing a great job. I like what he said," but it never goes anywhere. It dies at committee; it dies on the floor; or the House gets prorogued and it never happens. Then you've got to go all over again and start the whole process again from number one reading, number two reading, debate, and all that time wasted—resources, time and effort, because of fluff bills that really have no content. That has to change, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I'm happy to be up again. I listened to the member from Halton; I listened to the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek. The only thing I can stress is, as I said when I spoke about this bill not that long ago, it is extremely important. They've expressed concerns. It's extremely important this bill gets to committee as soon as possible so those concerns and many other concerns, if there are other concerns, can be addressed at committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It is a pleasure to rise to support my colleague from Halton. Of any of us in this assembly, I think most people recognize the name of Chudleigh with good, local food quality. Of course, he has spent an awful lot of time in this chamber, as have other members of his family, notably his grandfather, and I think he brings two perspectives to the assembly that might be missing elsewhere. One is his extensive experience in agriculture, and, secondly, he has a real great deal of insight into how it impacts the economy. I want to commend him for his 10-minute debate.

I understand the difficulty for the government that they don't want to continue to debate this, but I think, because many of us have experience in rural communities, we want to offer our ideas onto the floor of this assembly, and I think that's the responsible thing to do. This is a government that talks an awful lot about discussion and conversation and process, yet when we want to use the process to have that conversation and discussion, they choose to berate that notion.

My colleague from Halton talked eloquently about a number of things. One, he talked about the economy, the burdens that are in the way of our farmers in order to produce local food. That's very important. Secondly, he talked about examples in other parts of the world. I think that is very relevant. Third, he talked actually about the horse racing community. I must say that it is important that we do talk about the horse racing community because those are farmers too, and they're actually helping the sustainability of our family farms because they're buying feed from those farms, or buying hay from those farms. They're actually supporting our other farm communities. I think that's really relevant and very much a part of this debate.

I want to congratulate my colleague once again for a very value-added speech on the floor of this assembly. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? That is no surprise to me or any of our Progressive Conservative colleagues because we do know him to have the opportunity to speak, to speak with truth and conviction, and I applaud him.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to stand up once again and talk about this piece of legislation. The member from Halton has pointed out that, often, once pieces of legislation like this get to committee, you don't often get a chance to change a lot of it, but I think in a minority setting perhaps we can actually force some change.

I guess my question is, why wouldn't you do it right the first time? Why wouldn't you do the consultation with the stakeholders? Because people in this province are ready for real change around local food. They see the connection with the economy and with the environment and with their health and with their nutrition. They see it. They're ready for it. I guess the government wasn't ready for it, which is really unfortunate because it's a lost opportunity.



I want to tell you, people are so interested in local food that they're going to be walking around Kitchener-Waterloo with me on Saturday for the Jane Jacobs Walk, and we're going to visit an urban farm, a city farm. We're going to go visit some urban chickens. I don't know. It's going to be very interesting. But people are willing to walk around town with me and talk about food and talk about the economy and how to support sustainability within their own lives.

It's too bad that the Liberals didn't have the courage that it takes to create some legislation with some teeth, that would actually make a difference to local farmers and to the health of our communities.

We're going to end the tour at Seven Shores. It's a wonderful local business in Kitchener-Waterloo and they're committed, 100%, to local produce and local foods. They have a loyal group of people that come there every day because they know that they're supporting the farmers. They know they're supporting a business and they care about that business.

We on this side care enough to make this piece of legislation stronger, and I support it. If this debate ever ends, I look forward to making this piece of legislation a little bit stronger.

1500

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our question and comment time. I'll return to the member for Halton for his reply.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I appreciate the comments of the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek. The member for Vaughan wants to take it to committee, because as soon as we get to committee, this bill will have moved into the next stage. They want to move it on, and they haven't listened yet. None of the comments that party has made—they're not even debating the bill anymore—convince me that they've listened, that they've listened to their consultations, that they would like to move beyond aspiring to something. We all want to aspire, but this government seems to think it's an end in itself.

I'd like to thank the member for Nepean-Carleton for her very kind words. Yes, after 40 years in the fruit and vegetable business, I learned a thing or two. Unlike this government, I listened when I was there, and when you listen, you do tend to learn. That's why God gave you two ears and only one mouth: You should do twice as much listening as you do—and I thank the member for Kitchener-Waterloo very much for her comments.

Yes, we have a lot of opportunity in this province regarding fruits and vegetables. Many of you drive through the Holland Marsh up there. That's one of the fruit and vegetable areas that people in Toronto do know about. That area, about 12,000 acres of organic soil—there's probably another 1,000 or 1,500 acres that could be developed there—is interesting. That organic soil is a living thing. It's made up of decaying plant pieces, and it evaporates. Every year, about half an inch of that soil evaporates, so it's a finite resource and eventually—there's about 36 feet, 40 feet of organic soil over most of that area, so in about 80 years, that resource will have

disappeared. It would be a great shame if this government doesn't do what it can to make that resource as profitable as it can be for the people of Ontario during this period of time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm happy to stand in support of this bill, as other members of my caucus have done before me.

We definitely need more substance to this bill. There isn't a lot of—

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Substance.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** —substance, right? There's no weight. There's no meat to this.

It doesn't speak to increasing our local food consumption, which we all know is very important to us. It doesn't speak to the need to help farmers get their products to market.

In my riding, we have a lovely local market right on the brow. There's pie and there's jams and there's vegetables, and there's people coming together weekly in our community who are supporting that local market.

We have restaurants on Concession Street that shop there on a regular basis. Papa Leo's is the name of the restaurant. I see Leo there early in the morning, checking to see what's going on at the market that day. He builds his menu according to what's happening at the market and the time of year that the produce is being picked. It's absolutely lovely, and Leo does a great job, making sure that people in our area are able to have local food.

It doesn't speak to goals or targets in the ministry to meet local food procurement. That's a big issue. We know that within this bill, it says that in three years they're going to put some targets together. Well, what about having targets before three years; building in targets now, so that in three years we can look and see if we have met those targets? I think that's a really important piece.

This bill doesn't speak to how we're going to engage our next generation, our youth, and make sure they're continuing in the farm industry. And it's lacking transparency, Speaker. When you first read it, it appears that the only tangible achievement of this act would be to establish a Local Food Week.

However, I'm hopeful that this bill will receive further debate and amendment at committee. We've heard previously just from speakers in this House today that they have concerns about that. I'm hopeful also, with a minority government, that the government will be listening to our ideas here in the NDP caucus and putting those ideas into this bill to make it stronger.

In my riding of Hamilton Mountain, I have had the great pleasure of being part of the planning stages of an aquaponics greenhouse that we're looking forward to coming to our city. It's not a conventional method of farming: It uses tilapia fish to grow produce in an amazing concept. I encourage all members of the House to look at these establishments that are starting to get recognition. I know there's one in the Hamilton East—

Stoney Creek riding that has started, and they're just actually starting to get their products to the market now. You know, it's urban farming that we need to look at seriously, making sure that we're considering it. Something like that should be talked about further and in more detail in this bill.

The not-for-profit group that I've been working with is looking at supplying families in our community with more fresh, local produce, and that would happen all year round. By building greenhouses and having community participation in it, it's not just growing fresh vegetables but it's also growing a community and making sure that we have respect for the food that we're eating and that's getting to our tables. It's produce that's grown without the use of hormones, antibiotics or genetic engineering. It's a significant step forward for our communities, and I'm so proud to be able to be part of that group and in planning in those meetings and with those people.

I'm optimistic that by working together with all levels of government, Ontario will become a leader in local food production. However, the statistics show that the number of individuals entering the farming industry is on a decline. If we're going to talk about a sustainable food production industry, we need to make the sector more viable, especially for our youth. This includes creating opportunities for the next generation.

The aquaponics initiative that I spoke of a minute ago was proposed by a high school teacher who lives in my riding. The program that he teaches—developed by him and approved by the ministry—teaches the need for sustainable and local farming, and it's a program that's also built around saving youth at risk.

The first time that Al Nason, who is the teacher, came into my office, he came in with a 16-year-old boy who sat down to tell me about this project. The smile that radiated off this young man was absolutely incredible and contagious. This youth was completely at risk. He was not going to finish high school. There was no way this kid was going to college or university, and now he's doing just that, and he's doing it brilliantly. It's from projects like this, that planted a seed in this young man, and as he watched that seed grow, he was doing something productive. These are the kinds of things and the initiatives that we need to make sure are happening in our schools.

I had the pleasure of touring the greenhouse and meeting many other students who were just like him and who are all flourishing in different ways. Al has definitely been an inspiration for so many students in our community. The successes have been measured by the graduates who are now leaving his high school, and they're continuing their studies in agriculture.

But sadly, again, this bill does not speak to any of these projects of this sort. Al has worked with the education ministry, and he now has a program in the University of Guelph. It should be a model for other post-secondary schools in our province, where these young men and women are now coming out of high school and they're able to go into a horticulture field, and they're seeing the

benefits of that for their future. Knowing that they're going to be able to have an impact on our society, coming forward, is absolutely amazing.

We must enhance our school curriculum to include farming and agriculture. We must plant the seeds in the minds of our children early so that they will grow up knowing the benefits of eating locally grown products. We must create apprenticeship programs that will provide hands-on and practical training. If we want to have successful farms in Ontario, we must create programs in our education system to do this.

#### 1510

We have to have a vision moving forward. New Democrats have proposed sensible ideas. We proposed a buy-Ontario plan, which will make it a law that Ontario's money be spent here in Ontario. This will encourage food processors to purchase locally grown foods.

This government is set on increasing marketing practices for producers and making it easier to get their products on the shelves. I've been sitting in on the LCBO report writing, and we were listening to hearings. The wine growers are having big troubles getting their local wines—the wines that they're producing—onto our shelves. We need to be working with them, encouraging them to bring it all in together and how we can get the LCBO to open more boutiques and other things at farmers' markets to encourage the sale of the local wines.

New Democrats feel that the Ontario Market Investment Fund needs to be expanded to invest in local chains and suppliers. This includes regional food hubs to link farmers directly with processors, restaurants and consumers. It will also assist businesses, farmers and processors with the marketing and advertising of local products.

We also need to look at ways to provide relief from municipal taxation and zoning restrictions that are preventing farmers from processing their products on site. Hamilton, unfortunately, has a bylaw that says that we cannot grow urban chickens. But I know in some municipalities, that's appropriate and it works well, but none in Hamilton.

Farmers in the National Farmers Union have been vocal about OMAFRA programs and strategies. They've called into question how much OMAFRA spending actually goes toward supporting the family farm. Some of these farmers are finding themselves selling their farms because—and these are family generation farms—their children do not see any future in the industry.

There are several other problems that farmers are facing for which the government does not attempt solutions. My time is running short, but I will follow up in my last submission.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm drawing triple duty here today for some reason, but I want to just take a minute to compliment the member from Hamilton Mountain for much of what she said. She's right about education. Certainly the ministry has been working with local farm



groups to promote that, as has the Ministry of Education through the ag special skills programs in various high schools and the support of a number of commodity groups, apprenticeship and first-start farm initiatives with young farmers. There's a lot of that going on. The establishment of many local—the member talked about a small, cute market somewhere over on Concession Street. The government is doing a lot to support local farm markets. They're springing up all over—part of the Foodland Ontario initiative, working with the Greenbelt Foundation in particular, around farming practices and such. So there's lots going on.

You might be interested to know, on the educational front, if any member of the House got a chance to speak with President Alastair Summerlee at the University of Guelph and look at what's happening with the \$55 million in ag support that our government is providing: They're just over the moon in terms of happiness with the educational support that they are getting there. There are lots of things that we can do.

I just want to end by saying that when we did the extensive consultation around the province, one of the things we heard—and the opposition may be interested in this—is, “We don't want to see a bill that has all kinds of regulations and reports, all kinds of phony targets. We want to work together to establish those initiatives together and move forward together, not have government tell us what we should be doing. Regulations are a problem in farming.”

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my pleasure to speak to the member from Hamilton Mountain. I sat in a committee a couple of weeks ago, and we did talk about getting more of that local wine to the market. One of the things that I would like to bring up is that we certainly asked there that it—we've been proposing to go to the convenience stores to allow more, certainly in a rural area where we don't have boutique stores and probably will never have boutique stores. I want to wonder why they're continually voting against that, because they talk about wanting to support, but then when it comes down to the crunch of voting they are not always there or they choose to sit on their hands.

This bill, again—I'm representing the farmers in my community who came to me very directly, and they're concerned about the word “aspire.” They've “aspired” to set goals and targets. Well, I trust they aspired to balance the books over their nine-year tenure, and what have we got there? Record deficits, and they doubled the debt in nine years. They aspired to save the planet with their undemocratic Green Energy Act, and what have we got there? The highest energy rates in North America. They aspired to provide gas plants to Oakville and Mississauga, and what have we got there? A billion-dollar boondoggle and zero kilowatts of power; we're still talking about that one. They aspired to set up a recycling program for tires, and what did that result in? Increased fees to farmers and small businesses, by up to 2,000%.

How is that helping our agricultural community, particularly when they actually have the Premier as a part-time ag minister? I'm a little concerned there still.

Our ag community needs and deserves legislation that will make them more productive, will get that red tape and bureaucracy out of their world and let them be more productive farmers, because our farmers do feed cities—and feed all of us, in fact—and we need them to be the most productive people in our province. We need legislation that's actually action-oriented and will result in concrete benefits to our farmers, not a whole bunch more of this smoke and mirrors of, “We want to talk; we want to aspire.” This bill should have been things that were going to actually help the farmer. Not a farmer in my community has come forward and said, “Vote for that, Mr. Walker, because it's a great piece of legislation.”

Farmers feed cities, and we support them and will continue to push for concrete action for our ag community.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to join the debate and ongoing discussion about the nature of food in this province of Ontario, one that's incredibly important. It begs the question: Why are we talking about the need to ensure that there's a week to promote local food? It's 2013, and we have to remind people that it's important to support local food. Why is that?

Well, it is a fact that 20 years ago, 30 years ago, locally produced food was abundant in Ontario. Our tender fruit industry and our grains and oilseeds industry were absolutely flourishing. What has happened since then?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Free trade: the opening up of doors through free markets, and our jurisdiction, our primary producers, having to compete against the cheapest forms of food production on the planet, not unlike what happened in Bangladesh. What is the cost of a \$5 T-shirt coming into Canada? Well, we saw in Bangladesh that it's at the cost of health and safety regulations. It's at the cost of lives, for a \$34-a-month wage.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Yes, I am making that point. Why have we allowed and continued to allow the degradation of our primary producers in this country? Let's ensure that trading agreements have to be reciprocal, that they're fair trading agreements. The processes, the productivity, the environmental standards that our farmers put into place to ensure that we have the safest, most reliable source of food should not have to compete against the lowest-wage jurisdictions where those standards don't even come into play. Absolutely not.

This bill here today does nothing. It comes back to ideology. I've heard lots about the importance of farmers and agriculture in all your various ridings, but that party across the way and this party here—you guys signed your membership cards, so you should know what ideology

means in terms of your party preference, and your membership—you are ideologically opposed to protecting. As a New Democrat, I am proud to stand as a protectionist for our agriculture producers in this province, and I always will.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments continue.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I am so proud to speak on this bill, because the agriculture industry is a very lucrative industry in Ontario and I'm sure that most of the people don't know about it. I think it's worthwhile to repeat that the agri-food industry contributes \$34 billion to our economy. Imagine, \$34 billion in our economy.

1520

The agri-food industry supports more than 700,000 jobs across the province, and it's growing. The food processing sector: 3,000 manufacturing businesses. We have seen the manufacturing industry going down because of the challenge we have from other countries, developing countries where they pay people a lot less. I know the member from the third party raised a very good point a minute ago, and it's important to encourage our agri-food industry, because we know that the Ontario agri-food industry means quality, means safety. You're not afraid to eat what has been grown in Ontario because we know it's safe.

Again, the food processing sector—3,000 manufacturing businesses—contributes almost \$10 billion of our GDP and employs more than 94,000 people. It's an important industry and a growing industry. I'm proud to say that the University of Guelph has a wonderful campus in Alfred, Ontario. We are very proud of it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our time for questions and comments, and I return to the member for Hamilton Mountain for her reply.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister of Community and Social Services, the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, my seatmate from Essex and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and francophone affairs.

I'll start by responding to the Minister of Community and Social Services. You know, Minister, if we were using policies like this to make sure we could get healthy food into our folks who are on ODSP and OW and who are in need of food in our communities, then we would be doing a world of difference. Things like that are something that would be encouraging. In Hamilton we have a \$10 food box that gives fresh fruit and vegetables to a family. There's not a lot in it, but it's a small start. I believe we're only servicing 100 of those boxes a month. It's not quite near enough, but that's something the minister could be looking into.

Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, putting local produce into our correctional facilities and doing procurement policies that did exactly that, making sure we have local food in our schools, in our long-term-care facilities, are the kinds of initiatives that would ensure that farmers have a market for their

local produce and that we're not shipping the best of our produce out of the country and purchasing back produce that is not even close to the same quality that we can produce here in Ontario. There's nothing better than a fresh tomato right off the vine, produced right here in Ontario. It's the absolute best, and no other country can compare.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? I'm pleased to recognize the member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much for the opportunity. I'm pleased to stand up and speak on behalf of farmers from the beautiful riding of Prince Edward-Hastings.

I've got to tell you that when we did talk about Bill 36 with the farmers in my riding, this was their reaction: "Meh." This bill does nothing, really, to address their concerns. When they looked at it—Ashley Baker, my newest employee in my office, is actually a farmer in the Madoc area; she shows Charolais cattle. She looked at the bill, and then she talked with farmers from throughout the region about the bill. Their reaction was, "Well, there's nothing much in this bill."

It's been described as a fluffy bill; it's been described as a vacuous bill; it's been described as a public relations ploy on behalf of the government. There's just nothing in it. It's kind of hilarious to watch their reaction when we do talk about it. They'll say, "Yeah, we'll take that amendment and consider that. We'll take that amendment and consider it." Why didn't they put those kinds of things in the bill before they actually presented it to the House for debate? It's as if it was just created to take up time here in the House.

So I'm happy to fill my 10 minutes here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the farmers in my riding of Prince Edward-Hastings. And as you may know—because you've been around here a long time and you've toured across the province and have likely been to Prince Edward county, maybe through Hastings county as well—there are farms all the way from Milford in Prince Edward county in the south to Maynooth in North Hastings, up into the Canadian Shield, where it gets a little rocky up there, but there's still some good farming that takes place in North Hastings.

As you know if you've been to Milford or if you've been to Prince Edward county, we have some of the greatest wineries in all of the province. As our leader, Mr. Hudak, likes to remind me, because he comes from Niagara, I come from the second-best winery region in the province, but I would argue with him on that point.

When we did get the opportunity to talk to dairy farmers and beef farmers, chicken farmers and owners of wineries in Prince Edward county, again their reaction was, "Well, what is this bill going to do for me?" It's not going to do anything, so we were happy to take their input and bring it forward to the House here today.

I'm happy to tell you about one of those farms. It's called Donnandale and it's located in Stirling-Rawdon. This year, the Donnan family hosted the annual Hastings



County Plowing Match and Farm Show. It was a great event in August. I actually got to go up on a tractor, which was kind of dangerous for those involved, but I did the furrow and was doing some of the plowing contests there. It was a lot of fun. I can tell you their farm is a big one. It's home to 300 Holstein heifers, 260 milking cows, 357 kilograms of quota they have there, and Donnandale is one of the top milk-producing farms in my riding. It supports four Donnan families. Donnandale is renowned for being highly successful and innovative; however, it's an operation, like many dairy farms, that faces challenges, challenges that are not unique to the dairy industry.

The Voskamp family: They have a chicken farm, Victoria View Poultry in Prince Edward county. They can relate to the same problems that the Donnans' dairy farm faces, and none of those problems have been addressed in this Local Food Act. The Voskamps own and operate a farm with roughly 45,000 chickens. Their chickens are antibiotic-free and free-range. The Voskamps, like the Donnans, operate a business that I'm proud to say is crucial in this province.

The Donnans and the Voskamps aren't alone with the challenges that they face. In fact, many, if not all, farms across Ontario are facing the same challenges every single day. The challenges range from detrimental weather conditions, of course, to uneducated consumers. Weather conditions affect every farmer across this province. Poor weather conditions lead to a poor yield, which inevitably leads to challenging times for local farmers and their families.

The general public is relatively unaware of farming practices and the produce that our local farms create. Consumers need to be educated on where their food comes from. They need to be properly educated on the practices that exist on the farms that are producing their food.

We need to find a way to reach the people of our province and provide them with accurate and reliable information. We need to ensure that they know that the farmers in this province, farmers like the Donnans and the Voskamps, are some of the most hard-working and dedicated people out there. The public needs to know that these farmers get up often before 5 a.m. and they work well into the night to ensure they provide the best care to their animals, which ultimately provides the best product to the consumer. They need to know that farming is 24/7, 365 days a year. We need to make the public aware so that they are more inspired to buy Ontario produce and so that they can be proud of the farmers that live and work in this province. If we don't provide the public with an outlet to learn and get involved, they'll find an outlet of their own, an outlet that oftentimes doesn't support producers and farmers, an outlet that oftentimes challenges the practices and morale of farmers across this province.

Dairy and chicken farmers are not the only industries facing challenges in Ontario. The wine growers of Ontario also face numerous challenges in getting their

Ontario-grown and produced product to consumers. My riding is home now to more than 30 wineries located in beautiful Prince Edward county. The wineries in Prince Edward county not only produce some of the finest wine in Ontario but also are attracting a lot of tourism and economic development to the area. The wine industry is a major industry in this province and is rapidly growing; however, it's an industry whose producers, which include many constituents in my riding, face many challenges.

It goes without saying that in order to encourage consumers to purchase Ontario-grown products, they need to have the opportunity to do so. Wineries need to have opportunities to get their product into the market for consumers to enjoy. That's one of the things that we've been talking about on this side of the House, giving those wineries market access. Right now, they're being restricted by high fees to get into the LCBO stores. We're proposing that they have the opportunity not only to sell at their local farmers' markets, which they can't do right now, but also to have the opportunity to find other venues in which they can sell their products to the public.

#### 1530

The market is controlled by a government-run monopoly, as we mentioned, that isn't doing enough to maximize shelf space for Ontario-grown product. This is a problem affecting wine producers and, of course, consumers too. We need to provide ideas and options to help the producers of our province. We need to stand by them and help them with the challenges that they're facing, not create new ones for them.

We need to show the farmers of this province that we support them and we're committed to their success. We need to show them that we're committed to doing our very best to eliminate the challenges that they face. That's where this bill falls short. This bill does nothing to assist farmers with the challenges that they're facing right now and fails to outline a proper and effective approach to increasing awareness for our youth and the general public. The bill lacks substance. There's nothing in this bill that will provide the food producers or food processors of this province with any relief or any confidence. It certainly provides much less than what the farmers and processors of this province were hoping for.

This bill is a very weak, however accurate, display of this government's support of the agriculture industry. It lacks any kind of support that the producers in this industry desperately need. We have to do better for Ontario's producers and consumers. We must create a plan and a system that sees Ontario producers and farmers growing and succeeding. In our white paper, *Pathways to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario*, we present and outline a number of ideas that would do just that; ideas that do more than simply create a week a year to recognize producers. We believe they should be recognized daily for their contributions to our province. Our white paper suggests focusing resources on insurance-type programs. These programs will help support and protect farmers and will help even out the good years with the bad years. Ideas like these are important to ensure that

farmers can remain in business when faced with times of uncertainty. Ideas like these are how we plan to do better on this side of the House.

Another idea brought forth in our white paper is encouraging the creation of new regional food terminals across the province. The current Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto shortens the distance that our food travels and creates farm-to-city linkages. Creating a new terminal or several new terminals would provide another opportunity for farmers to connect with consumers in a way that's already proven successful. There is much that needs to be accomplished in this province to ensure that our farmers and producers are successful. This bill doesn't even begin to touch the challenges facing producers and farmers.

Farmers want more. Ontarians want more. I'm proud to be part of a caucus that's ready to deliver more for our farmers and our residents in Ontario. We're ready to bring forward ideas that are designed to build an even brighter future. We're ready to bring forward bills with significantly more substance than Bill 36. We've seen examples of those types of ideas in our white paper that was put forward by our critic for agriculture, the very well-respected Ernie Hardeman from Oxford.

I can tell you, too, that there are many other items—and we've heard about them throughout the afternoon; we've heard about them for the days that we've been debating this bill—that we're not addressing in the Legislature. Again, as the small business critic for the official opposition and the red tape critic, red tape is the biggest thing that our farmers are facing.

Ernie Hardeman was out there all summer talking to farmers. The biggest thing that's affecting their production is red tape in the province. We need to address the red tape. Bill 36 does nothing to address the biggest issue that's facing the farmers in this province.

Thank you for your time this afternoon. I look forward to hearing your comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to speak to this Local Food Act and to respond to the member from Prince Edward-Hastings. His comments were about recognizing the value of our farm community. I want to take a moment in this Legislature to recognize two of my favourite former constituents—four of them, actually—who have left to go to Prince Edward county to start their own farm: Ember; Mazy; Greg Landucci; and Misu Burns. They are some of the young Ontario people who believe that we need more sustainable agriculture in Ontario, and they've put their money where their mouth is. They've moved to Prince Edward county to do that good work. But we need their passion and their commitment to this province matched by the government.

If you just travel a little bit further east and you get to Quebec, you'll find a province that actually supports farmers and will support new farmers and people who want to work that land. I hope that when this bill goes to committee we are going to make sure that we look at other jurisdictions like Quebec that will support a young

farmer to stay on the land and support people like Greg and Misu and Ember and Mazy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** It's a pleasure to rise again. This is my third opportunity this afternoon to speak to this particular bill and I'm happy to have the chance to do it. In particular, I want to thank the member from Prince Edward-Hastings for his comments, and the member from Davenport.

Sitting here this afternoon, I had the chance to listen. It's very clear that the members opposite have some very important ideas and are very passionate about this particular issue. I know the members on this side of the Legislature, this side of the House, are very respectful of the passion that the folks opposite are bringing to this debate. I think that's why it's extremely important, as the member from Davenport mentioned in his comments a second ago—when he mentioned getting this bill to committee, it's nice to hear from that side, from that caucus, that they understand that this bill needs to get to committee so we can move forward with this, so we can actually respond to some of the ideas and concerns and passions that the members opposite bring and their constituents bring to this issue.

Once again, for the third time this afternoon, I would ask the members opposite to work with us on this. Let's get this to committee. Let's get this going forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to provide a couple of minutes of comments to my colleague the member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

First, I just want to speak to the member from Vaughan. I think the government would be well served if, during their opportunities to provide questions and comments, they recognized that we are making some excellent suggestions. I think that democracy can be well served if we debate those suggestions here on the floor.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank Mr. Smith, the member for Prince Edward-Hastings. I found his examples of local farmers in his riding, the Donnan family, the Voskamp family, very similar to farmers in Leeds-Grenville as well. They certainly have given me the same opinion that Mr. Smith's constituents have: that this bill is weak; it lacks substance. It tries to aspire, but it doesn't inspire. I think that's something we can all take into consideration today as part of the debate.

I do want to compliment the member on the wine growers in his riding. As he said, there are 30 wineries, and I had the opportunity to tour some of them during the summer of 2010 with my wife, Deanna. I have to tell you, Speaker, that the member should be very proud of that industry. They have done a remarkable job at marketing in eastern Ontario. The owners and the employees were very cordial and courteous. They provided all of the time that they could to us in answering our questions about their industry, and I think we owe it to them to provide access to markets that I think they deserve.



I have some fruit wineries in my riding. Louis Gaal from Blue Gypsy Wines is just one of them. I know Louis would look to leadership from the government to provide the access that both the fruit wineries and certainly the wonderful wineries in the member for Prince Edward–Hastings's riding have asked for.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It has been an interesting discussion this afternoon. It's not much of a debate, because I think that we feel very strongly, on this side of the House, that the act can be significantly improved, and I think that some of us are anxious to have that happen.

I think we have to just take a step back, though, and have a broader conversation about how you create truly progressive legislation. Traditionally, historically, you go out into the communities, you talk with stakeholders, you ask good questions. You talk to the people who have the lived experience, and these are those in agribusiness; these are farmers. These are people who are studying how to inject sustainability into the conversation around food. Clearly, that didn't happen.

This act says that this gives permission for the Premier to consult. We don't need permission to consult; inherently, this is something that it is our responsibility to do.

There are many stakeholders, like Sustain Ontario and Waterloo region, which has a sustainable food table, and they made recommendations. Those recommendations are not in this act because if they were, then this act would be effective and it would be stronger and it would connect all the dots that are missing on how to actually create and build the infrastructure for local food.

1540

This may actually even lead us one day to a conversation about development charges and how you build and support local economies. Infrastructure actually is a piece of this conversation that we haven't even touched on to date.

When this piece of legislation actually passes second reading and we get it to committee, we will actually give it some strength, give it some teeth and actually put some courage into the conversation that we need to have around local food.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our time for questions and comments. I return to the member for Prince Edward–Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for the comments from the members from Davenport and Kitchener–Waterloo, also Vaughan, and my friend Steve Clark from Leeds–Grenville for his thoughtful comments and for taking the time to tour Prince Edward county's wineries.

I would encourage everyone to do so if they get an opportunity throughout the next several months. I was at Rosehall Run, speaking with Lynn and Dan Sullivan on Friday afternoon of last week. It was a beautiful day there, and I met all kinds of people coming in from Ottawa and Peterborough and sampling the wines there.

There are over 30 wineries for you to choose from, so please, if you get the opportunity, make your way to Prince Edward county this summer.

Make your way through Hastings county—some of the best cheese factories in the world, and of course all of the local beef and chicken. The cheese factories are fantastic. The Fish Lake Garlic Man is there. I'm telling you, there are all kinds of great reasons to come to Prince Edward–Hastings this summer.

Again, just back to Bill 36, which is the Local Food Act: It doesn't address the problems that people in agriculture are facing today. Most farmers that I talk to are concerned about the value of their land because of MPAC assessments. They're concerned about the fact that these solar projects are now covering agricultural land in many cases. We're talking huge solar farms, not the panels that you would see set up beside a house, but we're talking acres and acres—hundreds of acres, in some cases—of solar farms that are covering agricultural land. It's happening in our rural areas, and we have to make sure that it doesn't happen in the future.

Energy prices and the Green Energy Act are a huge concern for our farmers. The red tape, as I mentioned earlier, and the taxation are issues, and we talked about the tire tax several times today that the government is imposing as well.

Abattoirs are disappearing; it's taking our farmers a lot farther from their farm to get their animals to slaughter to be produced, and it is a huge problem. I would just like to close by saying, I'm on my way back to Belleville, Mr. Speaker. The Belleville Bulls are playing game seven tonight against the Barrie Colts in the eastern conference final. Go, Bulls go!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We wish them well.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It is a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 36, the Local Food Act. Of course, I stand here in support of local food and to support this act, and hopefully we'll be able to improve it.

Speaker, I think that having this discussion is very valuable to the people of the province because I think that it is very important for our kids across the province to learn and understand where food comes from; how it impacts our health; how it impacts our environment; and, of course, how it impacts our economy.

I obviously support enhancing the supply of local food and access to it across Ontario. I'm fortunate. I come from a city riding that has a great deal of rural land and therefore, a lot of agricultural land. In fact, many of the roots of my community are agrarian, and they bring up ideas of self-reliance, self-sufficiency and, of course, sustainability. I'm very proud of the folks that I represent in Nepean–Carleton who are agricultural leaders.

I want to just mention a number of them because I think they have been a tremendous asset to me over the years in understanding the importance of local food and

to farming and agriculture. For example, Ed and Rick Schouten are two brothers who own a massive dairy operation just outside of North Gower, on Malakoff Road; Dwight Foster, who has become a really good friend of mine; he is one of the largest grain operators in Ontario—the largest in eastern Ontario. Of course, he and his brother have a wonderful sweet corn operation. A friend of mine, Hilliard Green: Although he has passed away, he has left a wonderful farm, Abby Hill Farms, to his sons, Neil and Grant. They have almost everything—pumpkins to plants; they have tomatoes and cucumbers. They have wonderful sweet corn; they have this great food stand right off of Bankfield in Manotick. I think they're doing great work and I'm so proud of them because they're also entrepreneurs and they feed people in the city.

My friend Dan O'Brien has a cattle farm, and he makes sure that community organizations often will have some beef to auction off each and every year.

My friend Earl Stanley has a local business, Stanley's Olde Maple Lane Farm, and they produce, obviously, maple syrup.

We also provide in our riding, in Nepean—Carleton, mushrooms, garlic, apples, strawberries—again, we are a self-sufficient riding. Even though it is in the middle of a major international city, the city of Ottawa, and even though we have fast growth, it's really important for the communities across not only the rest of Ottawa, but throughout the entire province to recognize where this food is coming from. That's so very vitally important.

I would like to commend our agriculture critic, Ernie Hardeman, the member from Oxford, for the tremendous work he has done in not only travelling across the province, going to farms and meeting with farmers, as well as other agriculture producers within the industry, but he came forward with a white paper which I actually think is very significant.

My colleague from Belleville earlier alluded to the food terminals statement that we have made, that we would like to see another one in Ontario. Of course, I will be lobbying very hard that that actually happen in the city of Ottawa for eastern Ontario, but I go back to Mr. Hardeman, the member from Oxford, and his steadfast determination and dedication to represent the agricultural community here.

I want to say one thing very quickly. This past summer, when there was a drought in eastern Ontario, Ernie Hardeman was there. He came down to meet at Wyatt McWilliams' farm just outside of Navan, which is inside the city of Ottawa. I am forever grateful for that. When there was an issue on the payment program to assist our farmers, when it ran out in March and it wasn't going to be able to provide the farmers with what they needed, Ernie Hardeman was again on the case for our farmers. I really do thank him for that.

A number of speakers have said that this bill needs to be improved. I think the government acknowledges that there might be some opportunities to strengthen the piece of legislation. We heard from members of the third party,

the NDP, that they also feel that this bill could be enhanced significantly. One of the ways in which we believe, in the Ontario PC Party, that this can be enhanced and improved is by actually amending the Education Act, because we believe that teaching food literacy is going to be very important to children, because it is important that they not only understand where the food comes from and how it can be prepared, but it also helps with, as I said earlier, that environment that we live in, as well as the economy that we're trying to grow in the province.

Our amendment would require that curriculum guidelines issued by the Minister of Education include food education as a mandatory component of instruction for pupils in every grade. This could be as simple as including it with health promotion or in gym class, but making sure that at some point throughout the curriculum, throughout the year, that we are addressing this very important and vital piece of information.

The vision that we have on this side of the assembly, and that I very much agree with my colleague from Oxford in having, is to have food education not only address nutrition and healthy food choices, but it will also give the kids in our schools across Ontario the additional knowledge of farming, processing and agriculture.

I was very pleased a couple of weeks ago to go visit a few of my friends in the Fraser family—three generations were there, actually. Mrs. Fraser started farming with her husband in 1949, then they built an even larger farm that went to their sons Richard and John. John's oldest son Kent actually had us all come to the farm and see their new mechanical milker, their robot milker. They actually have three for 150 dairy cows. It has enhanced their flexibility on the family farm. Basically this DeLaval system that they have actually takes a robot arm, it milks the cow, and the milk gets processed. It's very high-tech and it's very wonderful that this technology exists. It's very efficient.

I was so impressed with this after watching four of the cows get milked—and then, of course, another four get passed by because they had already met their quota for the day—that I actually brought my little girl the next day, unprompted, just to see John in the driveway. I said, "John, would you mind if I take my husband and my daughter into the farm? I'd like her to see this. My daughter is a city kid. She lives in a neighbourhood where there are houses right beside us, and we don't live on a farm. I'd really like her to see this and experience how technology, science and farming have come together to dovetail to become a very strong agricultural and economic driver in our community." So I did. I took Victoria there. It was amazing. When I was there, John said, "Years ago we used to have lots of kids come from the schools." Unfortunately, Speaker, that sort of stopped over the years.

1550

We should be having more of this discussion. We should be encouraging more teachers and our school boards to have those visits to the family farm and see not only what is happening in terms of production of food



but the advancements in technology. When they work together so well, we see not only an enhancement in our supply chain for food, but we also see that there are careers that could be made.

Food literacy and student nutrition, as a result of this, will offer the opportunity to build a greater market for food from Ontario directly and, as I said, in the constituency of Nepean—Carleton, directly in our constituency. There are children who may live in Barrhaven or where I live, in Leslie Park, who would love to learn a little bit more about the farm five or 10 kilometres down the road—food that's actually being sold in Ross's Independent. By the way, Mr. Speaker, Ross's Independent wins awards year after year for how they display their local Ontario produce, because they are big supporters of Foodland Ontario.

So again, in terms of our amendment that will be put forward by Mr. Hardeman and supported by the Ontario PC caucus, the idea would be to have food education not only address nutrition and healthy choices but also to better give our kids additional knowledge of the farming process and agriculture in general.

When we speak about this, Speaker, we look at this holistically. We look at this as a way for the government to actually improve their piece of legislation, strengthen that legislation so that we will actually make a profound impact not only on our agricultural sector here in Ontario and the importance it brings to our economy and, of course, the importance it brings to our environment, but also by teaching students a number of things. One that I think is important is that our farmers are the best stewards of our environment. Our children will learn that if they are dealing with this in school.

We've talked about the health benefits if our children are learning more about what local food means. Our children will learn a lot more about the economy and science and technology, as I've spoken about earlier.

Speaker, I think there's a really good opportunity here, and I'm very proud, for example, that our daughter's caregiver during the day, Myrna Hay, actually helps my daughter learn to grow Ontario products as well. We're teaching her how to grow tomatoes; as well, she's got a tulip. She's eight years old, and we're starting her young so she understands this. I think every Ontario parent wants the same opportunity for their children, and I think there's an ability to do that, working within our education system with our farmers and our teachers.

Speaker, I think good things grow in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for London—Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. I'm glad to put my input into the debate we're having today on Bill 36. Thank you to the member for Nepean—Carleton for her debate.

She brings up a very interesting point. One of the themes that went through her debate was the generation that's here today, the children we have here today. It's vital that we educate our children in where food comes

from. We need to have some improvements to the bill, and she suggested we amend the Education Act so we can teach our kids about agriculture in the classroom and then also take them out to the farm, take them out to where food is grown so they can get first-hand knowledge of where our food comes from and the type of occupational opportunities there are for young people.

We need to promote not just where our food comes from, how it's grown and, of course, how technology has affected the farming industry, the agricultural industry and the types of career opportunities that are out there as well, but also encourage children—this generation—to look at farming as a career. New Democrats feel we can do that, but this government needs to make it easier for that encouragement to happen and for young people to pursue those careers. We look at perhaps creating an apprenticeship program so that students, young people, can go out and experience it first-hand, learn those skills and then get reinforced that it could be a career they could venture into. We know we don't want farming to be a phased-out kind of career, where we're going to look to our food, our sustenance to survive, outside of Ontario, outside of Canada.

Definitely, the member is making a good point, that we need to educate our generation that's here, upcoming, but we also need to promote those jobs in farming so that we don't lose that sector from Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the member for Nepean—Carleton for her comments. I think she will agree that the farmers, the consumers in my riding of Ottawa Centre—they all want to have their say, to talk about this bill at the committee. So let's get this bill in the committee so that we can get their point of view and get this back in this House and pass it so that many people can benefit from this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to provide a few comments on the wonderful speech by the member for Nepean—Carleton. I think it is a critical piece of the local food equation that hasn't been included in this bill. We really need to equip our young people with a better knowledge of food and nutrition, including how to actually prepare a meal.

My good friend Monda Rosenberg raised this issue with me today, and I promised her that this afternoon, during debate, I would reinforce that aspect that's needed in this piece of legislation. With the prevalence of fast food and prepared meals in our society, I'm afraid that we're raising a generation that has no clue how to fend for themselves in the kitchen.

I know the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Mark Wales, brought that issue of food literacy here when he was at the Legislature and met with a number of people from the government. I hope they really were listening, because I think it's something they need to take a look at in this bill, to change the context of

this bill so that we're actually teaching children in school the issue of food literacy.

I want to say to home economists like Monda and to agriculture leaders like Mark Wales, I think we need to encourage this government not to dismiss this program as part of Bill 36. We have some great products that our farmers are producing. I think it's great for us to promote those products, but we still need to make sure that our children don't make bad food choices, that we give them the tools to be able to take that wonderful local food and to join with the movement to make sure they are able to prepare the food.

I truly believe that the member and others have really hit the nail on the head when they say that we need to add food literacy to Bill 36.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened intently to the member when she spoke, and she spoke quite eloquently. I was pleased to see that she cast herself and particularly her daughter in the light of a city girl, because one of the things that we forget, because so many of us live in towns and cities today, is that we are probably the first generation—and if not the first, the second—divorced from the land.

Through the whole of human history, of course, people lived on the land. They farmed. They were hunters and gatherers. They did a number of things, but they were not divorced from the land. They actually got their food from the place in which they lived. This is the first, or perhaps the second, generation where that is not the case. I commend the member for taking her daughter to see exactly how a cow is milked.

I know that when I made my own speech here a few days ago on this very subject—I had never, ever been on a farm when I was her age. I had never seen an animal up close until the time I went to the Royal Winter Fair. It was quite an experience to me, not only to see the animal up close, but to actually smell it.

I think that her daughter has learned a very valuable lesson, and I think that anybody watching today, anyone who has children, should get that child or those children back to the farm, if only to see it, because it is a way of life that will become increasingly divorced over time to people who live in cities. But it is a way of life that we all need to understand and to appreciate, because without the farmers, none of us could exist. None of us would have the food that we need. None of the cities would prosper. It is to them that we owe so very much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Nepean—Carleton has two minutes for a response.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I thank my colleagues.

First, to the member from London—Fanshawe, thank you very much for adding to the debate. I couldn't agree more that we really need to educate our children and a lot of adults on where our food comes from. I think we can do that together, but we need to make sure we have a strong bill.

1600

To my friend the Minister of Labour, he has a wonderful little market in his riding, the Parkdale Market, that I've gone to many times. Maybe many here don't realize this, even though Ottawa is the largest agricultural city in the world; my colleague from Ottawa Centre actually has a major farm, Canada's experimental farm, in the middle of his riding. So I appreciated his comments.

To my colleague from Leeds—Grenville, we share a boundary, and we share an awful lot in common. I thank him for his comments because I think he demonstrated one thing very quickly when he first arrived here in 2010, and he has continued it on, as he is a vocal advocate for the people he represents. He gets intimately involved with the details of their lives, and I appreciate him bringing that to the floor of the assembly.

To my colleague from Beaches—East York, thank you very much. It's a very important point when you talk about being divorced from the land. In my community, for example, in Barrhaven, 10 years, 20 years ago that was farmers' fields, and now that is, of course, housing developments. It's very fast growth, explosive growth. So it is important that we provide the next generation and this current generation that's in our school system with the knowledge and the skills to do a couple of things: understand where the food comes from; understand how to make healthy food choices; understand that our farming community does provide employment opportunities; and, finally, understand that the environment is important, and the best stewards of the environment are our farmers. So I do appreciate that.

I must say that I think it would be wonderful if we could amend the Education Act to include something like food literacy in our schools, encourage our school boards to take students to farms across this province to see what a tremendous way of life it really is and how much it contributes to our province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** This has been a tremendous pleasure, to listen to the ongoing debate on the Local Food Act bill, an Act to enact the Local Food Act—a lot of acting going on there—2013. Well, acting is about what we're getting with this bill. I don't want to get too negative, but this bill in itself does not accomplish a whole lot. But I'll tell you what is accomplishing something, if people actually take it to heart, and that is the debate that's been going on in the House with respect to this bill and the thoughtful and insightful suggestions that are being made by members of this assembly on what we might do to better promote this wonderful industry—and it is an industry, but it's also a vocation, a life, this life of agriculture and farming, one that is so very important to us as a society, not in the numerical way that it used to be in the number of people who actually practise farming, but farming is tremendously productive with technology and machinery and everything that we have today.

I'm going to talk a little bit about what it was like in Renfrew county in the old days, and I'm not talking



about my lifetime. I'm talking about when my families came here from Ireland and Poland back in the 1800s and what it was like farming in Renfrew county. But before I get to that, I want to talk a little bit about our son, Zachary, and Stephanie and their children. They raise their own chickens and their own turkeys. We were there on Saturday having a birthday party for our granddaughter, Lilli, who I'd mentioned last week in the House. She turned one on April 24. But our grandson Wallace is four years old—"Four," as he would say. "How old are you, Wallace?" "Four." He's four today.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Happy birthday, Wallace.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** So I've got to say happy birthday to Wallace. Grandpa loves you and can't wait to see you again.

Of course, they raise their own turkeys and chickens—God, they've got hundreds and hundreds.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Free range?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, yeah. But, you know, May, Wallace's older sister, when she was just a couple of years old—she wasn't even as tall as those turkeys, and they're big. These domestic turkeys, the ones you raise, they're quite large. She's right in there among those turkeys just like they were her best pets. She had a chicken, one that had no feet. The chicken had no feet, and she used to take that chicken around like a pet and protect it from everything because the chicken was kind of helpless. She'd have it in the house, have the chicken in the house.

So they're learning about the importance—they eat their own meat and they share with some others. One of their friends raises some pigs and they share the bounty, but they eat a lot of wild meat too. They're all hunters as well, so they eat a lot of venison and moose and bear and you name it. If it's crawling, they'll find a way to get it on a plate. They're very good at cooking it too.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I've heard about Willi Schmidt.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** So anyway—yes, Willi Schmidt. He'll be in Rankin on Friday, cooking up some roast beef. Well, Willi's not running the catering business anymore. He sold it, but he's kept all the good recipes, including those marinated onions that we'll be having on Friday in Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke up in Rankin.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Can I come? I can't wait.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Lisa MacLeod is going to be joining me there, so it's going to be a real humdinger. I hope some of you folks over there can make it.

Let's get back to the old days of farming. I want to talk particularly about Renfrew county. Renfrew county is one of the most beautiful places in the entire world, and I am very blessed to be living there and also to be representing that area. Part of Renfrew county is good farm land, but part of Renfrew county is not conducive—it's a big place, folks. Renfrew county is four times the size of Prince Edward Island. It's a big place, but not all of it is good farmland. In fact, some of it was never really made to be farmed at all. I'll tell you, when you think back about the people who came to that area of Renfrew county—and I'm talking about the western end, Barry's

Bay, Wilno, Killaloe, those areas, up to Eganville and that—man, oh, man, real Canadian Shield country, it was absolute hard labour to be trying to produce food—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Back-breaking.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —back-breaking hard labour to produce food on those tracts of land. And if you drive through that country, you see the old stone fences. You see these fences of nothing but boulders and boulders and boulders. Every one of them would have been laid in there by hand, every one of those boulders removed from the land, transported over maybe by a horse and a stone boat over to the property lines, and building stone fences. We can just imagine when those folks came over here—as my friend from Beaches East-York said, we were people of the land then. You had to be able to raise your own food. The first year that you got here to this country, you had to have a crop in the ground. You had to be able to raise some kind of food so that you could support yourself through the year, through the winter, and also be able to build some kind of a rudimentary cabin to be able to have shelter.

Then, of course, life has changed over the years. But I think it is unfortunate that so many young people today, particularly those who are raised in the cities and have never been on a farm, really don't understand where their food comes from. They think it comes from Loblaw's or Valu-mart or Metro or some of the food stores. You need food? That's where you go. Well, that may be very well where you go, but that food had to come from somewhere. My friend Peter Shurman is nodding his head.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Sobeys.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Sobeys. We're going to get Peter on the farm here one of these days.

Look, I'm not a farmer myself, but I've got the absolute—I can't speak to the depth of the respect I have for them.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My boys back there are saying I know how to spread the fertilizer. Well, you know what? I'm not so bad at that, but I'll tell you, the people who do make that choice and make that commitment to feed us by devoting their lives to ensuring that there's food on our table through their efforts—I take my hat off to them. We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

I think one thing we want to remind people of and this government—I know they always talk about being friendly to rural Ontario and friendly to farmers. I mean, this food act is a great idea—I shouldn't say great idea. No matter what it is, there's going to be some good in it, and this is a good idea, because it is going to help to promote something that is very important, and that's recognition, understanding and awareness of how important agriculture and the people who make their living in the agricultural business are.

But this act in itself is not going to do anything. It really doesn't compel anybody to do anything other than the minister must write a report about local food and devote a week the Monday before Thanksgiving each year to be proclaimed Local Food Week—no harm. It's

not going to cause anybody any problem at all. But I think what we have to do is remind ourselves: What are we doing to make sure that farming remains sustainable? What are we doing to make sure that farming remains sustainable? What are we doing so that—and I don't say, "The practice of farming," I say, "The people in farming." We have to ensure that it is sustainable for them, that they are sustainable, that they can make a good living on the farm, providing us with the food that we absolutely need.

**1610**

I don't know anybody out there yet that doesn't require food—maybe the Tin Man; you just have to oil him once in a while. But the rest of us require nourishment, require food, and that comes from our farmers across this province.

Yes, we get a significant portion of our food from other sources as well, but I think this Local Food Week may promote us to do much more than we do already about procuring that diet from as near to home as is possible. I know there's all kinds of people in my riding who continuously promote the 100-mile diet, ensuring that we procure as much of our diet as possible from within that 100-mile radius.

So there are some positive things coming out of it. I think the most positive thing that I'm getting is the thoughtful debate that's going on here. The question will remain: Is this government going to become supportive of farmers, or is it going to continue to stand in the way, as it has in so many cases, with their regulations and red tape?

One thing that we've done in our white paper is to propose basically a one-stop shopping window for farmers to deal with all of the regulations and red tape that we put in front of them as government, and that's a positive sign. I hope that we're going to hear something positive from this government in that regard, as opposed to putting up more barriers.

Let's celebrate our farmers and the wonderful work that they do for us.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for Beaches–East York.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and again to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for his speech. I thank him for his dedication to the people of the farming community. I thank him for what he had to say here today.

He's absolutely right about the debt and gratitude that we owe to each and every farmer who is out there. He's absolutely right in terms of how history has changed here in Ontario, for a scant few generations ago, back to his own family, who were Polish and Irish immigrants who came here to the land—so much has changed.

I ask, though, that the members start to remember, when making their speeches, that we are here in day 8. Much of what needs to be said has been said. As much as all of us appreciate the farming community and the role that they play within the Ontario economy—as much as we appreciate how much they are central to our being

well fed and to Ontarians being proud and prosperous—the time has come to actually take some action to support them. I do agree with the member that there is not a great deal in this bill. But just as there is not a great deal in the bill other than to proclaim a farming week and for the minister to occasionally write a report, it still behooves us to do that.

I don't know how much will be gained from further speeches, and I ask everyone to temper that thought and to pass this so we can send it to committee and, in the end, make it the law of Ontario. We have many other things, other important issues, that need to be discussed as well.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am in complete agreement with the honourable member from Beaches–East York: Let's get this bill passed. It's wonderful hearing these stories—we've heard lots of them—but let's get it passed. We've got other work to do in this Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Huron–Bruce.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Well, hello. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to stand and reference the comments that we got from our honourable member from Renfrew.

You know, there are really good people—good things grow in Ontario; good people grow in Renfrew county as well, because there are a lot of champions out there hailing from Renfrew county that are working so hard to make sure people know that food doesn't just come from their stores.

I say that in referencing Crystal Mackay. Crystal Mackay is the executive director for Farm and Food Care Ontario, and she comes from Beachburg, Ontario, which is in Renfrew county. For her entire life, Crystal has worked so hard to make people appreciate where their food comes from, and now she's at the helm of a very effective provincial organization that is doing just that. I invite people to go to that website, Farm and Food Care Ontario, because there you will see a series of virtual farm tours to see how goat milk is produced, to see how cattle are treated and fed and cared for, to see how chickens are raised and eggs are produced. It's a very, very effective virtual farm tour of a whole variety of species and commodities, and that's where we need to be going when we talk about local food.

As my colleague said, this act to enact the Local Food Act is a lot of window dressing and it doesn't go far enough for what we need today in 2013. I look forward to hearing the rest of the debate, because I'm sure my colleagues here will be very well versed to demonstrate why we need something deeper. If this gets to committee, we need some hard talks as to how we're going to support local food in the future.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for his conversation on the debate that we're having today.



We do agree in the House that local food is extremely important. We've debated this, as the member from Beaches–East York said, and we've had enough conversation. We're all in agreement that this act is a lot of fluff. Instead of this act taking action to support local farmers, to employ local farmers and to provide local food to the Ontario consumer, this government's act is making plans for a plan.

We know how important it is to have local food production created in Ontario, and that it sustains jobs. This is an industry that has been here from the moment of time because growing food is a part of survival. If we don't have access to local food, then we're not going to have access to food so we can continue to sustain ourselves. It's extremely important that we keep that in mind, but by the same token, we need to pass this bill to committee because we're all in agreement that it is a very important thing to do and that local food is something that has to be sustainable.

We also need to make sure we're promoting the advertising of local food and helping our farmers—not just having a lot of fluff about how great local food is, but having a real plan so that we can keep our farmers in our economy, in a job and creating the local food that we all want to see here in the House and that all our communities want to see in our farmers' markets. Part of that is making it a strong bill so that we can have that support for farmers, so they can continue on with the good work they have been doing.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, you have two minutes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I want to thank my colleague from Beaches–East York; the Minister of Health, who didn't speak too long; and the members from Huron–Bruce and London–Fanshawe for their comments as well.

To the member from Huron–Bruce: Thanks for the shout-out to Crystal Mackay. It's always great to hear about the fine agricultural people we have in Renfrew county. I say to the member for Huron–Bruce, maybe she can make it up to the Beachburg Fair one of these days. It's the first big fair in Renfrew county, always around the 20th or the 23rd of July. It's a great fair and it really shows what kind of community spirit there is, and the hard-working spirit of our agricultural people.

I appreciate all the comments that have been made, and I think that there's an opportunity here for us all to renew our commitment to our agricultural people across Ontario. They do such a tremendous job for us. Our products are of the highest quality. They are safe. They are tasty. They are nutritious. We need to spend a lot more time letting the world know just how great our products are, but more importantly, letting each other know not only how good our products are but where they come from. They come from your neighbours. I know that if you live in the city of Toronto, you may not think of that, but your neighbours are not that far away. They're outside of the city of Toronto, and they're producing the kind of quality food that makes us among

the healthiest people in the world here in Ontario and Canada.

**1620**

I think the Local Food Week is an opportunity to blow our horn, maybe, champion a few things and put a stamp on a special week of the year. But let's not forget: Our commitment to farmers should be at least as good as their commitment has been to us.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** It's a pleasure to rise today and speak to the Local Food Act. I know we've had a lot of debate on this, but it's nice to talk about something as wholesome and that is such an important part of our heritage here in the province. Almost all of our families—many of our families—date back as farmers in different communities and different townships. To me, it's something that's almost family-like.

First of all, I should tell you that my wife, the girl I married, was a dairy farmer's daughter. Even today—

**Interjection:** She's got the hair.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** She's got the hair, yes.

Even today, we always travel the back roads wherever we go so we can look at all the different farms and what's new in the operations, because once you've been a farmer, you're sort of a farmer for life. You've always got that love and concern for the land.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I should tell you that both of my children have decided in the last year to get into real estate, and they've both bought farms. I'm very proud of them, because they've made deals with neighbouring farmers—they both have full-time jobs—to make sure the hay is put in place and taken off and make sure there are crops put in on a rotating basis.

With my daughter's farm—she's into horses; I think they have four horses now. They're right across the road from a farm where two of my granddaughters train horses all the time. So agriculture has become a very important part of our family right now. I'm looking forward to doing a lot of work out at their farms. I like doing physical work anyhow, and I'm looking forward to helping them both a lot over the next few years.

I also want to say a few things about local food. One of the things I really enjoy—I don't know how many other people in the room do this, but I love going to farmers' markets. It's a great place to meet people. You meet the very sensible, common sense type of people, and they're in there on the weekends, earning a few dollars, whether it's produce or some fruit or maple syrup—that type of thing. It's just fun to go and be part of that. Again, it goes back to our heritage and the kind of people we are. All of my farmers' markets in my riding seem to be doing very, very well. We've got some small ones, and we've got, for example, the Orillia Farmers' Market, a large farmers' market. But there are some challenges they face. Obviously, the Local Food Act—I give credit to the Premier. It's a nice, warm and cozy type of legislation. It doesn't really say an awful lot, except it gets a lot of debate.

One of the things I wanted to put on the record, though, is how can we help farmers more? Calling it a Local Food Act—I hope everyone would want to buy, and would buy, local food, whether it's at the farmers' market or at our produce stands. I know we've got Ego's up our way; we've got Hewitt's in Orillia. These are all people who sell really nutritious, good food. They're well-supported by our communities, and they're particularly well-supported by people who visit our communities, particularly in the summer months when they come to their cottages and love to go to the farmers' markets as well.

Just before lunch, I met with people in my riding, people from Simcoe county, and they're concerned—this is where I think the real concerns are—how good farmland is being just crushed with this Green Energy Act. I don't know how many have seen these solar farms. Whoever came up with the idea that we're only using class 6 and 7 farmland—it is such a misdemeanor to people to actually say. I can show you farms—I don't actually have the exact bushels per acre, but they're some of the best farmland you can imagine, because they've had proper tile drainage, proper fertilizer etc. Now they're covered in solar panels, with no accountability and no accountability to the local municipality. What really drives me crazy is why this House has twice now voted against bills that would give municipalities more power over where those bloody solar panels would go. They are sick. Some day, I think we're going to pay the price for it. We're already paying it with our hydro costs and special rates for people who have put these in. That's what the farmers are telling me. There's land that they could have bought and put into productivity, with wheat or corn or soybeans. They could have done that, and you know what? Right now they're covered in these metal solar panels. Someone, like the Samsungs of the world or the big energy companies, is making a lot of money out of this at the expense of all the people who are trying to, say, use the energy for their factories and they're finding that the energy costs are too high because of this. So, it has been a real mistake.

The same group talked to me about growth. We took the greenbelt, and all we've done is leapfrog it into Simcoe county. I'm going to tell you, it has been a mistake. We've got a place up in the Midhurst area, in Springwater township, where they want to put 22,000 more people in the secondary plan. Originally, the growth plan for Simcoe called for 6,000 people. Now the government has made an amendment that will allow 22,000 people. Guess where the people are going? Not in areas where there may be pine trees or some more rugged area; they're going right on the farmland. The best farmland you can imagine is going to be plowed under for sewers and water and townhouses. I tell you, it's completely irresponsible. The people up in our area, particularly the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture, are adamantly opposed to this kind of nonsense. But, you know what? We're stuck with these guys. They've made these laws. They're making these amend-

ments. I have no idea who made the amendment to go ahead and give them 22,000 more people in one little township. It's almost like a favour is being paid to somebody, you know, for something they've done. I don't know. But it's not right, and we have to make changes.

I want to thank, first of all, the Premier for bringing the bill forward. It's a good topic to debate. But I want to pay special attention to some of our former Ministers of Agriculture, people I've worked with here: for example, Bill Stewart, Lorne Henderson, Helen Johns, Ernie Hardeman in the last term, and Noble Villeneuve—Noble Villeneuve was my favourite minister. I met him a number of times at ROMA. He was here before I became elected in 1999. I understand that his daughter, Roxane, is now our candidate up in that area. I've talked to her a few times. She's just like her dad. She's full of energy and enthusiasm and will make a great member when she arrives here at Queen's Park. I'm quite sure she will do excellent work and will be here after the next election.

With that, I've only got two minutes left, but I wanted to say, as we move forward with the Local Food Act, I thought that one thing that was really interesting today was the thought of an amendment by our education critic to actually make sure that this act had input from education. Who needs to be trained more than our young people? Young people from all political stripes and from all different ridings across Ontario should know in their schools about nutritious food, how to buy local food and how to support our economy by buying local food. So I applaud Lisa MacLeod for bringing that amendment forward. I hope that when we get to the committee hearings the government will listen to these kinds of amendments. The government says, "We want to get the bill passed; we want to get it into law." So let's make sure that we look at really, really good amendments at the same time as we move forward.

I also want to thank all my colleagues, particularly in my party, that have come from agricultural backgrounds and agricultural communities. I know that basically it's almost impossible to be an MPP in rural Ontario without being highly connected to fall fairs and all the different associations, whether it's the cattlemen's association, the hog producers, the chicken farmers or the Dairy Farmers of Ontario. We're all connected to those people on a regular basis. It's a group of people that I love to work with.

This year I've been fortunate enough that I've been able to work with another group of people I really enjoy working with, and that's all the people I'm working with to fight the College of Trades—all the tradespeople in Ontario. So I've had kind of a perfect year as far as being able to work with people, because we've been able to work with the people who do hard work and create jobs and create opportunities for people. Of course, the farmers are right in there.

1630

I've only got 20 seconds left, but I did want to say a special thank you to all the farmers in the riding of Simcoe North. In particular, I'm noticing a lot more



young farmers up our way and they're helping on the family farm. Just recently, I know of a young couple who decided they were going to take over their parents beautiful dairy operation up in Tiny township. I was so proud of the whole family because they were worried the young lad may not want to do that.

Again, Mr. Speaker, my time's up and I'll make more comments in my final hit.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The member from Simcoe North makes some good comments about the incredible value of agriculture to Ontario's economy and society.

The bill before us is one that is very modest. It is one that effectively talks about planning to make a plan for a plan, and it proclaims a Local Food Week. And that's pretty much it. If we're actually going to do something useful with this bill, I think we need to stop debating it in this chamber. We need to get it to committee and talk about amending it so it actually can have an impact on the agricultural communities, on the farm families, in this province.

This bill reminds me of one that was brought forward by the Liberals a number of years ago, the status of the artist act, which started out quite grandly and ended up being effectively a status of the artist day. Not a bad thing, but a far cry from the ambitious title. Similarly, this bill, the Local Food Act, talks about the need for sustaining Ontario's rural economy, our agricultural economy, about our farm families, but I don't think this plan for a plan, this declaration of a week in recognition, is going to do even a tenth or even a hundredth of what has to be done in Ontario to make sure that this sector gets the recognition it deserves and the resources it needs to come to its full potential.

I appreciate what the member from Simcoe North had to say. I ask that we get on with the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I'm not going to speak long. Obviously, on the government side, we're very excited, very enthusiastic about Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act. I've had opportunity in the past week or two to speak on this piece of legislation and talk about the incredibly vibrant and diverse agricultural sector that I have in my community, out into Murillo, Kakabeka, Oliver Paipoonge, Conmee, Gillies, O'Connor, Neebing, all of my rural riding—a very active, aggressive and diverse agricultural community.

As a government, we are excited and enthusiastic about the legislation, but we want to get it to committee as soon as we can. As a result of that, I'm going to stand down and not take all the time available to me. It seems that's what we're doing as a government. We're hoping that the members on the opposite side will do that as well and allow us to get this into committee as quickly as possible so it can be passed as soon as possible.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's an absolute pleasure for me to speak in regard to my colleague from Simcoe North. He's a passionate person. I've admired him immensely since I came into this House and how he's out on the hustings talking to people every day of the week, average Ontarians, and hearing their story, listening and bringing that back here.

He knows what he's talking about. His wife's a dairy farmer. His children have bought farms and they have horses on their own property, and I know he's been a stalwart against the Slots at Racetracks Program boondoggle that the Liberals have created in decimating yet another industry.

He talked favourably about farmers' markets, and absolutely they're wonderful things. I have a lot of them in my riding in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, and it's a great thing. But you know, he brings up a valid point, that we need to be doing more. He always comes with the question: How do we help? How do we do more in our community to make it viable?

Garfield has travelled across this province in regard to stopping the trades tax on apprenticeship programs. He's been relentless, with 100 communities he's travelled to. In the course of those, he's met a lot of farmers who are bringing those concerns that he's brought here.

He talked about the Green Energy Act and the solar farms. We don't see them producing any food for our great province, and yet they're taking good-quality farmland and they've taken local democracy away from the locals. He talked about the greenbelt leapfrogging, again, decimating and taking out good-quality agricultural land in his riding.

He made a very valid point about former ag minister Noble Villeneuve and his daughter, Roxane, who's coming back because she wants to make it different, like her dad. She knows that there are huge concerns out there in our agricultural communities across this province. I'm proud that she has put her name forward. I think she's going to do a darned good job when she joins this caucus, because she's there like Garfield Dunlop is; she's there for the people. She listens. She wants to bring true, good legislation to this House that's really going to actually result in action, not just a bunch of fanfare and fluff and a 30-second buzzword.

Speaker, it's absolutely my pleasure to stand here and give Garfield Dunlop his kudos that he deserves, because he's always out there working on behalf of his constituents and bringing good legislation to this House.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Just a reminder to the member: This is the third person that spoke in the last little while, and you're all calling each other by first names and last names. I'd ask you to refrain from that and call the members by their riding.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My apologies, Speaker. It's Garfield Dunlop from Simcoe North.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The member from Simcoe North raises an interesting point, and I want to build on that. He

talks about the concern about sun farms, or solar farms. What I think is even more of an issue, a bigger issue than the number of acres that are used in solar farms and that could be used for agriculture—I think a bigger issue, and it's a serious issue across all of Ontario, is that though we think of Ontario as having vast, vast amounts of land, there's a very limited amount of land that's actually good enough to grow food on. Much of where our cities are sprawling and our suburbs are sprawling—they're sprawling into that very high-quality land.

Our limited land which is actually good and arable and can be used for farming is being covered by more and more expansion. We'll realize in the not-too-distant future that if we are serious about having local food, we need to have a place to grow that local food. We need to have local farms. If all of the arable land, all the good land that we want to build these farms on, is being developed into homes, residential housing only, and industrial complexes, then we'll run out of that good land.

I think we have to seriously consider the way we build our infrastructure and look at building houses, industry and commercial things that we definitely need, but build them in areas where the land is low-quality. Build them in areas where it's not arable land, not high-quality agricultural land.

All too often, we're seeing the direction or the way cities are expanding and growing is that we are taking land which is great for farming—it turns out that it's also great for building homes, because it's easy to till, it's easy to plow and it's easy to set up in terms of building construction. But that's a very precious commodity, and it's a very limited commodity. I think we really need to reconsider how we expand the province so that we really have space left to grow local food.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Simcoe North, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like to thank the members from Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Toronto—Danforth, Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound and Bramalea—Gore—Malton for their comments with respect to my comments on Bill 36.

I will go back a little bit to the Green Energy Act. Basically, I appreciated all the things people said. But I wanted to touch base a little bit on something that was brought up to me today, and I wasn't as informed as I should have been on it. It's this thing with the Green Energy Act and around the solar panels, and apparently even with some of the wind turbines, and that's stray voltage. Apparently, Jason French, from Holstein Ontario, is bringing a report forward and some comments on this.

Here's the problem, Mr. Speaker. They've said that these are only going on scrub farmland, these solar farms, these big FIT programs. That may be fine to people who don't believe, under the Canadian soils inventory—but the reality is that most of that farmland that they're going on across Ontario has been improved. Today, that farmland is qualifying as class 1, 2 or 3, and it's actually,

in most cases, abutting other good farms. So this stray voltage is impacting agriculture production and cattle, the beasts, that are out on different farms. It's a serious, serious problem. I had no idea until a dairy farmer today—I think he has about 500 acres of crops up in the Springwater township of Simcoe county, and it was him who came forward and said, "You have to address this because it's major, and it's having a major impact on our farms."

**1640**

I hope that the government is listening to some of these concerns. I'm hoping that's the kind of thing under the food act that we can actually address at committee that everybody wants to get to so quickly.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to say a few words. I look forward to getting it to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to join in the debate this afternoon to discuss Bill 36, the Local Food Act. I have to tell you, Speaker, that when I am out at events, this is one government bill that my constituents do ask me about.

In fact, recently, I was at two events back to back, and the issue of the Local Food Act came up. One was a fundraiser for a group called Loaves and Fishes. It provides nutritional meals for families in Brockville. They had a fundraiser called Empty Bowls. The second was the annual Delta Maple Syrup Festival, which has been a tradition in my riding in north Leeds since 1967.

The very first person who approached me that day asked me about our local food charter and the Local Food Act. It didn't take too long into that conversation to really realize that that constituent even knew that the bill didn't provide a lot of detail and really was like a lot of the legislation that we've seen from the government—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I appreciate that the Minister of Health is responding to me. Actually, Bill 11 was one of those bills that the government said would address the problem, in terms of the debacle at Orme. But when you spoke to people, like members of the opposition, like the Ombudsman, it was severely lacking the detail and the transparency that people wanted.

I guess, again, sort of the same thing is clear with the Local Food Act. When you read the bill, as I have read it, and you get past sort of the fuzzy mom-and-apple-pie preamble, there's really no meat on the bones. Nothing sums it up better than this line from the bill: "The Minister of Agriculture and Food may establish goals or targets to aspire to in respect of local food." That has to be one of the most wishy-washy statements when it comes to a bill. To use the word "may" really gets the minister off the hook when it comes to setting goals and targets.

There's really no discussion that's been brought forward by the government side on how they expect that those targets are going to be met. They have a few veil words about getting it into committee. We'd really love



to see how we would actually meet these targets, or establish the targets, other than aspiring to them.

I guess it pretty well sums up the state of affairs in the Liberal cabinet these days. Ministers have done such a terrible job in running the province that the only performance measure they can handle is to aspire to get it right. Don't worry if you can't balance a budget, manage the health care system or come up with an energy policy that isn't causing the province to go broke—no, just aspire to do those things.

I should mention, though, that there is one thing this bill does do in that it creates a Local Food Week during the week leading up to Thanksgiving. They didn't even get that right, as the member for Oxford has said in his address. Anyone who has spent any time in rural Ontario knows that, for the past 15 years, the week leading up to Thanksgiving has been Agriculture Week.

While our caucus is going to support this bill, and I'm going to support this bill, there's one thing that I can tell you: There are a number of things that we want to amend in this bill once it gets to committee. The member for Nepean—Carleton talked about the issue of food literacy, and I know the member for Oxford has mentioned, on a number of occasions, this issue of Agriculture Week.

If you want to talk about local food, I think I mentioned earlier the Delta Maple Syrup Festival, but in every corner of my riding of Leeds—Grenville, you'll find farm-fresh meat, eggs, dairy, honey, fruits and vegetables, and just about anything else you can imagine that grows in Ontario. Our farmers' markets have thrived in the past couple of seasons as more and more families actively seek out local products to put on their table.

Earlier this spring, there were about 50 people from a cross-section of community groups who attended the first meeting to discuss a local food charter for Leeds—Grenville and Lanark. The meeting was organized by the Healthy Communities Partnership and EcoPerth, and I'm looking forward to hearing about the next steps in that exciting project.

I also want to mention the groundbreaking Local Flavours, which has been an initiative of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere reserve. If you're planning, Speaker, to visit our corner of Ontario, eastern Ontario—I can't imagine why you wouldn't want to see that beautiful corner of the province. We've got a number of speakers from eastern Ontario today. I want to tell you, you should explore the website [www.localflavours.org](http://www.localflavours.org). You can plan a route to tour local farms, you can meet the farmers whose products are second to none, and you can get everything you need to prepare a gourmet local flavours meal from our area of the province.

There is one local flavour in my riding that I do want to mention, and that's a rather large operation: Burnbrae Farms in Lyn. It's about 10 minutes from my constituency office in Brockville. In fact, for the past 125 years, this local company, operated by the Hudson family, has grown to become one of the leading egg producers in Canada. I attended an Earth Day tree planting and barbecue at the farm. I had a chance to talk to Joe

Hudson and his team and learn more about their award-winning products, but also to see a new structure being built on their property, which I'm told will be Canada's largest egg grading station. Whenever I go to Burnbrae Farms, I have to make the pledge to Joe Hudson—and I was proud to make the pledge—to support supply management. I can't think of a better company than Burnbrae to represent my riding, and I always look for their products when I go to the store or to local facilities.

There's another group that I want to do a shout-out for today, Speaker, and I did previously in a two-minute hit: Wendy's Country Market in Lyndhurst. The owner, Wendy Banks, is really on the cutting edge of our local food movement in Leeds—Grenville, far earlier than when it became trendy, as it is now. She has been in it for the long haul. I can't think of a better resource on local food than Wendy, who has her store and mobile market. Her delivery service now has products from more than 70 different local producers. They really know how to connect farm to fork. Yesterday, Sunday, she had more than 400 people at her farm gate store for their weekly food festival, to meet the musicians, artisans, chefs, bakers and farmers gathered to celebrate local food. In the summer, the number for that weekly food festival swells to a thousand people every weekend, coming through to Wendy's store.

Families are eager to be part of something like the local food movement, and I have a sense that when you're doing that, you really get a chance to see who you're actually dealing with.

There are three things that Wendy wanted me to bring up that are lacking in this. She identified three key things that we need to do. First, you can't let the word "local" get misused, because it takes away from regional promotional efforts. It's great that people want to buy Ontario first, but I think what people in my riding of Leeds—Grenville really want is they want to identify the products from the farmer down the road. You need to protect your regional identity, and I know that people in the Frontenac Arch Biosphere have mentioned that as well. I've said it in the House before. The definition in the act says "Ontario," and I think the expectation from people in my part of the province is that when you look at Ontario food, they want to look at it from a regional perspective. We've identified and put a lot of effort and time—when we talk about local flavours, it's our region of eastern Ontario. Those are the flavours that we want to capture.

The other thing that Wendy mentioned to me is the issue where it says, in terms of regulation, "food produced or harvested in Ontario"—all you have to do is look in the section that says the minister "may" make regulations to limit that definition. Again, we see the word "may" rather than "shall." I really believe—and I know Wendy does—that this is where the Local Food Act has really failed.

**1650**

The final thing I want to mention on her behalf is reducing red tape. That's the biggest problem that I think anyone in the local food business really sees: the

increasing amount of red tape that's being brought up. She plays by the rules, but she's mentioned the issue of small abattoirs. She's also talked about the challenge for smaller producers to gain access to institutions like hospitals, jails and schools.

Speaker, I could go on. I could actually ask for consent to speak at least—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Thank you again.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I really admire the passion of the member from Leeds–Grenville. He's really excited about this great Local Food Act that we've been putting forward here.

I'd like to talk about some of the comments the member from Simcoe North made, and, I believe, the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, when they were building up previous Ministers of Agriculture in the Harris government. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that when the Honourable Noble Villeneuve was a Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs—here's a quote from Wikipedia—“his government presided over considerable funding cutbacks in the agriculture department and the elimination of local representatives.” That's 42 OMAFRA offices, one in Alexandria, my hometown. They closed 42 OMAFRA offices and they cut \$164 million out of the agriculture budget—\$164 million. That is shameful.

Stop professing to be the great champions and defenders of agriculture and food in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It's great to get up and speak to the comments from the member from Leeds–Grenville and the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. I haven't counted how many offices they have reopened—I don't believe any—but he's right about one thing: There's a great tradition in the Villeneuve family. We will be looking forward to continuing that on in the Legislature.

The member talked about some of the local initiatives in this bill and the word “may.” There's a big difference, as I think he pointed out, between the words “may” and “shall.”

We'll be looking forward to getting to committee, because this is the government that really almost shut down farmers' markets. I remember, when I was warden, leading the charge for eastern Ontario. I went out and really, through public opinion, forced them to reverse the legislation that would have killed farmers' markets. Is there anything more local than the farmers' market as far as local food? It really is too bad to see initiatives like that. They're really hurting the farming community.

The education one I've heard before. My neighbour used to entertain some of the kindergarten classes from the local schools. That's gone because it's deemed to be

unsafe to have these children visit farms. Really, this was a farm that had chickens and cows and different types of horses; they had a few hundred deer on the farm. It was kind of a unique farm in eastern Ontario because it looked at so many different aspects of agriculture. Sadly, changes through this government and a lack of initiative have stopped those tours by the children from the local schools. I think it's really missing something.

We aren't seeing the intent. They're a government that maybe talks about some of the cuts that went on, but if they really are going to talk about them, they should have at least tried to put them in again if they thought they were wrong. But when you don't undo something, I guess you agreed with it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'd like to add something to this debate today. In 2005, there was a study that noted that current dietary habits of Waterloo regional residents do not meet the dietary recommendations of the Canadian food guide to healthy eating. Over half, or about 58%, of residents consumed fewer than the daily recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables.

The other part of that study shows that evidence suggests that people are more likely to meet their dietary recommendations when they have ready access to fresh fruit in their grocery stores.

I think we're all in agreement. We've gone over this a little bit now, and I'm happy to continue to debate because that's what democracy is about. So if the party opposite wants to continue talking, I'm happy to do that and to make some valid points as to why local food is so important.

When we're talking about dietary needs, fresh fruits and vegetables certainly are going to be the best source of a balanced and nutritious diet. When you go into a grocery store, you don't want to buy a can of tomatoes; you want to buy those fresh tomatoes.

This act is very important. I'm glad it's here in the House. It needs a lot of work. As we said before, it's a little weak. It's a plan to create a plan. It's a week to recognize Local Food Week, so that's great—to promote it. But we need to take some action, and the way to do that is to lob it over to committee so that we can all work on it and make it a stronger act so we can have support for farmers, to have our local food grown in our cities and our communities. Consumers, as they've done in the past and continue to do, support the farming industry and how important the farming industry is to our society so that we can enjoy the fruits of their labour.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I thank my colleague from Leeds–Grenville for the fact that he tied in a lot of the people he knows in his riding, the farmers' markets and specific farmers, people who have done an amazing job.

I wanted to get back to Noble Villeneuve for a moment because the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell—when I first got to know him was through the



eastern Ontario disaster relief plan. You all remember the ice storm?

**Interjection:** Yes.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** That was a tragedy. Everyone in eastern Ontario will, of course, remember that. He led the attack on that, trying to get us funding. I know that our county—at the time, whatever year it was, I was the head of the planning services department in the county of Simcoe. There was so much tragedy down there. Through a program that Noble Villeneuve was involved in as the Minister of Agriculture, he actually asked other municipalities if they would provide funding. If the municipality provided funding in any other parts of the province, the province would match that. It was a great program.

That's when I realized the sensitivity of the man and how he really got to understand, as a cabinet minister, the value of being a good minister and looking after Ontarians, not only in his area but reaching out to the rest of us in Ontario to help him with that. As a result of that, that's the kind of person his daughter will be—Roxanne Villeneuve—when she comes to represent here at Queen's Park. She'll be someone who's passionate. She's a hard-working person and I'm sure the people in the riding she's running in will elect her and she'll be here as a good, solid, hard-working person representing the people of her riding. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Leeds–Grenville has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to thank the member for London–Fanshawe, the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and also the member for Simcoe North for their comments.

I want to say to the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell that in my riding of Leeds–Grenville I've had the pleasure of knowing three people who have represented our riding: my predecessor, Bob Runciman; when I first was elected mayor of Brockville 30 years ago, Norm Sterling represented the Grenville side of the riding; and, for a period of time, East Grenville, because of redistribution, was represented by Noble Villeneuve.

I have to say to the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell that Noble Villeneuve was one of the most respected members of provincial Parliament in eastern Ontario. Doing your research off of Wikipedia is not the way to deal with this man. This man has stood up for farmers in eastern Ontario and has represented the people of this province and sat in this place and would never—and, I must say as well, your predecessor, Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde, would never have stooped to that type of research and that type of slam for that gentleman.

He was a man of honour, Speaker. I'm pleased to know Noble Villeneuve. Yes, I do; I know his family—his wife and his daughters, including Roxanne, who's a wonderful person. But I tell you, the members of this Legislature have stood up for people in eastern Ontario. When I look at people like Noble Villeneuve, I'm proud to know that man, Speaker. I would never, ever use my

time in this House to malign that member or his predecessors because I've served with them, and I think it's very important that we have that type of decorum in this House.

**1700**

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I stand in my place this afternoon to add my voice to the debate on the government's bill promoting the buying and selling of local food in Ontario, Bill 36, the Local Food Act.

I am generally supportive of this bill, but I am disappointed by how weak the bill actually is. At the end of the day, though, it is better to have this bill than to continue to live in its absence. If this bill passes second reading, amendments can be made in committee to make this bill more effective, and the first amendment I support comes from the member from Nepean–Carleton, our education critic, to teach the importance of local food in our elementary schools.

My comments on this bill will be critical but constructive. Bill 36 fails to live up to expectations. I have three major concerns with this bill:

(1) Input from key stakeholders has been ignored, and so the bill is ineffective.

(2) This bill does not take an incentive approach to helping this important industry, but takes a restrictive approach by mandating requirements to be met by stakeholders.

(3) This bill does not address the real issues that are holding back the local food industry, such as over-regulation and restrictive new laws governing food production in Ontario.

First of all, the producers and consumers have been waiting a long time for the government to come forward with a comprehensive strategy to help and highlight local food. Many stakeholders have been working with the government for years on this issue. Stakeholders such as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Holland Marsh Growers' Association and the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association have told the government what needs to be in this bill. We now know that much of their effort was futile, because this government didn't take their advice. These organizations, and others like them, are close to the ground on this issue and need to be heard.

Respect for local food producers begins with showing them that government has been listening. Bill 36 falls short on that, and I will expound on that a little later.

The Premier, who is now doing double duty as agriculture minister, has touted the government's action on this file and promised this Local Food Act to be one of the first pieces of legislation her government brings forward this session. Well, I think it was a rush job. This bill is not a comprehensive strategy to support local food. It is a public relations plan. Unfortunately, more often than not this government shows itself to be all talk and no action.

As the bill's preamble states, "Ontario has robust and resilient local food systems: a highly productive agri-

cultural land base, a favourable climate and water supply, efficient transportation and distribution systems, and knowledgeable, innovative farmers, food processors, distributors, retailers and restaurateurs.” It goes on to say that our local food systems’ diversity reflects the diversity of its people. This needs to be celebrated, the bill says.

Well, I submit that we need to do a heck of a lot more than celebrate our favourable attributes as Ontarians. We need to change the way our agriculture industry is treated by government. Instead of pandering and positioning, we need an act we can actually sink our teeth into.

Secondly, this bill fails to give the local food industry incentives. Bill 36 talks about setting targets and meeting goals, putting in metrics to measure success by. This is all well and good, but the message sent to farmers is, “You’re not working hard enough,” and to consumers, “You’re not buying enough.” Also, mandating that all government organizations buy local food is not a reasonable solution, because at least in the short term it will drive up food costs for those government organizations and departments. We simply cannot afford any increases in government overhead at the moment. Instead, we should promote local food to other people who can afford it.

As a start, we should explore the feasibility of offering incentives such as tax breaks for producers and consumers. We could waive the provincial sales tax paid by local food processors. To help make the price of local food competitive, we could waive all sales taxes usually paid by or passed on to the consumer. These are just two examples of providing incentives to making, producing and consuming local food more attractive.

Thirdly, there are some pieces of legislation and regulations that in fact interfere with or discourage the availability of local food to local consumers. In the last 15 years, over 100 small community abattoirs have gone out of business in Ontario. The main reason is the high cost of upgrading facilities that is mandated by the many new regulations that have been forced upon these small businesses. In effect, we have regulated these abattoirs out of business. There is now a shortage of abattoirs across Ontario. This has reduced the availability of local beef, pork, lambs and goats to local consumers, and it has increased the cost of slaughtering several-fold, which is passed on to the local consumer. This increased cost discourages the purchase of local meat by local consumers.

We are so over-regulated right now that the abattoir owner can be charged with a host of crimes, the farmer can be charged with a host of crimes and even the local consumer can be charged with a host of crimes. The crime is trying to sell, process or buy local food.

I have an example in my community, where Major Mark Tijssen was taken to court and charged by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food for the terrible crime of buying a pig from a farmer and taking it home and killing it. That is illegal, according to the Food Safety and Quality Act, and Mark defended himself in court for two years and was fighting it on his constitutional right to be

able to choose the food he wants to eat. MNR, which was taking him to court, or the crown attorney, decided to drop the charges at the last minute. What a waste of taxpayers’ dollars; what a discouragement of local food consumption. That is very, very wrong. That is a bad law, and we need to fix things like that.

More recently, Anthony Scissons was selling lambs to community members. The MNR were on the road with their cameras in black-tinted-window cars, taking pictures of him and his customers, and they’ve charged him with the terrible crime of selling lambs. This kind of thing has to stop. It discourages local food consumption. The government has gone overboard with regulations, and those are two great examples of just what “overboard” means.

I recommend that we review all regulations that pertain to small abattoirs and farmers in the business of producing, processing and selling local meat to local consumers. Regulations should be modified, streamlined or even eliminated with the objective of making local meat more readily available to local consumers and improving the business environment for abattoirs and farmers.

We should encourage and allow local consumers to buy meat animals directly from farmers. There would be a willing seller and a willing buyer. The buyer would inspect the animal and accept it as safe food. The buyer would take the animal or carcass to his home property for processing. This has been the culture and tradition and trade of mankind since agriculture was first practised.

Another area where local food can be and should be promoted is at farmers’ markets, country fairs, church suppers, community suppers and celebrations, and similar events. These local food-centred events are wonderful chances to celebrate local food for farmers, cooks, processors and consumers to meet, talk about and eat Ontario’s delicious foods that we grow. We must again review all regulations with the objective of making local foods at these community events more available. No more pouring of bleach on sandwiches at church suppers by the health unit.

1710

Local food in Ontario can only flourish if local farmers, small business and small abattoirs can flourish. Small businesses in the local food production chain need our help, and consumers need to be proud of their local food producers, whereas now they’re not sure why local food is not available everywhere.

This bill deserves our support, if only to get it into committee, where we can temper its flaws. I will be voting for this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I listened with some great intent to my colleague from Carleton-Mississippi Mills. He spoke probably the most profoundly of all of the speakers I’ve heard over the last number of days, coming from a very rural community and understanding the travails of many of the farmers and what they have to deal with



daily in terms of maintaining their quality of life and the way that they have done things for generations.

It is difficult sometimes for people from the city, such as myself, to understand bringing home a pig to your farm to kill it and eat it. It's difficult because we wouldn't do that kind of thing, but it wasn't that many years ago that I remember my own grandmother going down to St. Lawrence Market, buying the turkey, bringing it home and doing what she had to do for Thanksgiving dinner. It's something that's not done anymore, and I can understand why people in the farming community who have spent generations doing farming in the way that they were taught by their parents and their grandparents want to hold on to that aspect of their life.

I commend the member for bringing that up, and I am glad that he is supporting the bill, but I would like to go back—having heard that story, I don't think anybody else could tell a better one. I'm saying that we've probably talked enough on this bill. I could be totally wrong. Somebody may come up with something better, but I think that he's probably said one of the best ones for the day. I, personally, have had enough.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I thank the member for his speech. I would point out to the House that we've had about 17 and a half hours' debate on this bill. Let's bring it to a second reading vote, and send it to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Again, some good information from the member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills. He stressed in the development of this proposed legislation the lack of consultation and the lack of citizen participation or involvement of people within the food community and the farm community.

It's unfortunate that this government didn't listen to agriculture groups such as the Christian Farmers. They didn't listen to the National Farmers Union, who in their proposal addressed the need to bring more young people into agriculture. NFU stressed the need to protect the environment through, again, another piece of new legislation—there's an opportunity here to do that—and to ensure that our farms are financially viable. There's no mention of this at all in this particular bill.

Again, if you support local food, you have to support the local farmer, the local grower and the local producer of that particular food. The OFA laid out adoption of market structures to empower farmers in the marketplace—value-added initiatives, co-ops and farmers' markets, for example—and food education. I took agriculture in high school and I taught agriculture in high school, so I benefited immeasurably from that.

We've got to make comment of feeding a pig and selling it to your neighbour down the road. I know many years ago—putting together a barbeque—my neighbour had some hogs; he had about seven or eight. You climb in the pen, and—you've heard that expression, "Squealing like a stuck pig?" Well, it's not true. They squeal

until you cut their throat. Once the deal is done, they're quiet as anything.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Okay. Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** It's a pleasure to rise and to speak about this bill, this very good bill. We just want Ontarians to be able to eat local food wherever they are: at home, at school, at restaurants, everywhere.

I know that we've had over 17 and a half hours of debate. I'd like to know if there's anything new that hasn't been said already. I would urge the members to send this bill to committee if there's nothing new to say, so there's a lot of pressure on the next speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I am a farmer, and I used to sell my products at the Carp Farmers' Market. It was one of the most enjoyable times of my life. I happen to like being a salesman, and I've always loved being a farmer. We had beef cattle. I could sell you a roast beef that, you know, you would think you were getting the most wonderful roast beef in the world, and last week I would have been mad as hell at that flea-bitten old cow. I learned that from my father. He could take the nastiest old cow in the world, and by the time the guy came to buy it, he'd dress it up like she was just like the Queen of England. Of course, it was always worth more.

Food, I think, is an invaluable thing. When you can buy food directly from the farmer, there's great value there, so we should never complain about the price of food. I thoroughly enjoyed dealing directly with consumers, giving them advice on what good food was, where it came from, how we cared for the animals, how we fed them, how we kept them healthy. People understood that farmers genuinely cared for their animals and that if they weren't well cared for and healthy, they wouldn't have been good, healthy food. So everything goes together. Good management is being a humane caretaker of your animals—properly fed, properly housed; you look out for their health—and all of those good things. In the end, we get wonderful food to deliver right to the consumer.

I remember, at the Carp Farmers' Market, one of the greatest events I had was one of the first times I had actually had anything to do with politicians. We had this feature day and it was Beef Day, so we decided we'd have a cow-chip-throwing contest. Of course, the guests of honour who threw the cow chips were the politicians, so I used to have great fun at the expense of politicians. Of course, invariably, the highest-ranking politician, who happened to be the mayor of Ottawa, Jackie Holzman, won. I've got to hand it to her: She was a real man, because she turned down the gloves. She just grabbed the chip and threw it.

It was a wonderful experience. Buying food from farmers and selling it to consumers is a wonderful experience. Food is fun and it's enjoyable, and it's a wonderful country we have here that we can do that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** It's a great honour and privilege to stand in this chamber, always. Of course, we're talking about Bill 36 here this afternoon.

I've listened with some, obviously, interest in the matter because, being a farmer myself, food production is always in the forefront of my thoughts and my constituents', from the great riding of Northumberland-Quinte West, where we have fantastic beef, dairy, and of course, let's not forget our grain production there as well.

I do, obviously, have some major concerns with this bill—a flawed bill, if you will—for a couple of reasons. The government, I think, is completely out of touch with rural Ontario. This just is one more example of being out of touch on what rural Ontario is and represents. A bill on buying local food is not going to be sufficient to sustain the rural economy.

I mean, this is a government who actually destroyed the horse racing industry not too long ago—60,000 people out of work, potentially. These people are not asking for a handout. They're hard-working, tax-paying citizens of this great province, and yet this government thinks that by introducing Bill 36, all is well in rural Ontario.

1720

I'm here to tell you that it's not all well here in rural Ontario. It's very disconcerting for me on a number of points when it comes to education; we'll use as an example. As a former high school teacher, we always impressed upon our students to go into various trades and skills and go off to college or university and be the best that they can be, and hopefully get a job once they come out of college, university or apprenticeship programs. But one of the things that was never actually stressed was the opportunities that were there when it comes to the agricultural sector, whether it's actually being a farmer themselves or being a part of an industry that is behind the scenes of the actual farmers and the growers and the producers in the manufacturing sector, whether it's canning, processing etc. That is where I think this government has failed: in educating young people in the opportunities in the agriculture sector that are there.

It's been said here in the chamber this afternoon that if you're going to support local food, you have to support the local farmer. Unfortunately, in my riding, the average age of a local farmer is 54 years old. So 54: What kind of opportunities does that mean there are for young people to reinvest, purchase the family farm, and continue the production, whether it's beef, dairy, poultry or grains? There is no incentive. And as we lose farmers, we're losing that local feel, we're losing that opportunity to buy local produce.

If we don't get to the root of the matter, which is ensuring that young people have a vested interest in taking over the family farms, then it's all for naught. We can bring legislation until the cows come home.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Or the horses.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Or the horses. But it's not going to address the immediate concerns or the future concerns of food production here in the province of Ontario. That's where I have some major concerns.

I was reading an article the other day saying that generational farms are more productive than the big agribusiness that we've become. Even though the size of family farms and agribusiness have grown dramatically in size—and that's important—it's also important that the young people on those farms and running those agribusinesses have the opportunities. I don't see it in this bill, in particular.

Let's not forget that today's modern farmers are very high-skilled and have a very strong knowledge base profession. We tend to sometimes forget that, Mr. Speaker, especially in the urban centres, because we're disconnected. That's not a jab towards my urban brethren and sisters, it's just the fact of the matter that there is that disconnect. We need to do a better job of reconnecting urban and rural Ontario together and understanding each other to move forward and work collaboratively so that we can actually build this province again.

I think our caucus, the PC Party, has some great things. The member from Oxford, Mr. Hardeman, has done a fantastic job on reaching out, and Mr. Pettapiece, my seatmate from Perth-Wellington. They've done very strong and great things reaching out to the agricultural communities here in the province of Ontario. We put forward our white paper which has outlined some very great ideas that have actually been supported by rural Ontario. You know, I think that we really need to look at that.

I think of individuals back home. When I talk to Scott Honey—I grew up with Scott in the great town of Warkworth. It's small but mighty: Both the MPP and the MP come from Warkworth, population 500. I don't know if it's the water or—

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's the work ethic.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** It's the work ethic from Warkworth. I think you're right. The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound is right. It's the work ethic from Warkworth.

When I think of Scott Honey, who does a lot of custom work for me now because of a lack of time to manage my own farm, planting the crops and so forth—when I talk to him and I talk to other farmers, there's a lot of red tape there.

My esteemed colleague over here from Carleton-Mississippi Mills made a very good point, that the local abattoirs are having a really tough time with red tape. I think of Mr. Hayden Taylor, just down the road from me, who has his small abattoir. Again, he's doing a service to produce local beef and poultry and items that can go onto our dinner tables at night.

I think of Mr. Dave DeNure, who is the proprietor of Hoards Station, with the sales barn there. He has a couple of major concerns, one obviously around red tape. He called me up a few weeks ago and we were talking. There was some issue around Mennonites selling some farm-fresh eggs at the sale barn. An inspector came around and asked if this was locally produced, like at the sales barn. Dave said, "Well, no. We let various vendors come, like a farmers' market, and sell their products,



whether it's a chicken or a rabbit." They weren't allowed to sell their fresh eggs. But if Mr. DeNure had had laying hens on site, then those farm-fresh eggs would have been allowed as his right to sell to the general public. So there are some issues there. Also, the taxes on the sales barn and the red tape—it's endless here with this government.

I'll end with this. Where I also have grave concerns with Bill 36 is that Mr. Bert Johnson, a fine member who served with distinction his riding, brought in Agriculture Week. For the last 15 years, the week leading into Thanksgiving has been celebrated not just for food and produce that are produced by farmers and agri-business here in the province of Ontario, but for the hard work behind the scenes that actually goes into everything. So for the last 15 years we've had this, and I think it's a great disservice and dishonour to Mr. Bert Johnson for this government to step in and try to claim that they are the saviours of agriculture.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My congratulations to the member for Northumberland—Quinte West for his comments on this bill.

If we're actually going to preserve farmland in Ontario, if we're actually going to preserve our agricultural economy, then what we need more than anything else is action on sprawl. Farmers need support for their products. We need to have local purchasing, but we have to make sure that we don't continue to have this endless expansion of cities like Toronto and Ottawa and Kingston into the good farmland that exists around them.

This bill, I think, will be seen by most people as inoffensive. It really sets things up to plan for a future plan. It is meant to recognize local food in a week that's so designated. But, Speaker, as you are well aware, that is far from what Ontario's farmers and agricultural communities need. They need their land protected so it doesn't get paved over, so it doesn't have subdivisions built on it. It needs to be preserved for the long run. That's something that this government needs to be bringing as a far more substantial piece of agricultural legislation.

As I've said before, this bill needs to get out of this chamber and into committee, where it can be amended and made far more useful.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

1730

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I'd like to congratulate the member from Northumberland—Quinte West for his wonderful 10 minutes of building themselves up while tearing this government down.

Let me just stress one of his points that I actually agree with. Today's modern farmers are highly skilled; he did say that. Technology has changed over the years. I can remember back in 2003, under the previous government, when we experienced what we would call either a blackout or a brownout right across the province of Ontario. Why was that? It was because of a lack of in-

vestment in the electrical system across the province. That had a devastating effect on the farmers in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. Farmers were a whole week plus without electricity. So don't pretend to care about rural Ontario if you're not prepared to invest in the electrical infrastructure like our government has done.

What the people of this province want—the stakeholders want us to move forward, this House to move forward with the Local Food Act. It is the Local Food Act.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Point of order.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** That issue with the brownout originated in the States. It had nothing to do with the power system of Ontario—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I don't find that that's a point of order; it's an interesting point of information.

I'll return to the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you, Speaker. What I can say is, the people, the stakeholders want this act to move to committee. They're filibustering; they're delaying it. They're putting up 10-minute speakers. The third party is compromising a little bit here. They want to work with us to take it to committee.

Stop wasting time in this House and let's deal with the legislation. Send it to committee. Do everybody a favour. Stop looking after yourselves.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to have a chance to comment on the speech from the member from Northumberland—Quinte West. I certainly found it interesting, the rewriting of history by the member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

I would like to comment on the member from Northumberland—Quinte West. He made some good points about abattoirs disappearing across the province. That's something I've heard when I speak with farmers in Parry Sound—Muskoka, about the difficulty and the travel distances, and how that really works against local food production. So I certainly agree with them there. They talk about the rules and the cost of the rules that make it prohibitive to stay in business. If we want to have local meat production, we need to address that problem.

This bill, Bill 36, is really more about PR than anything else. It establishes Local Food Week. It may establish targets to aspire to; it may require the minister to prepare a report about local food every three years. That's about it.

I am happy to say that in Parry Sound—Muskoka, there is quite a bit of local food produced, and, I'd say, a growing movement to make people aware of it. We have Savour Muskoka. I attended an event at Brooklands Farms, Ken and Katya Riley's place, not long ago. They were in the middle of the maple syrup harvest. They also have berries, and they have asparagus and many other

things growing there. There's the Muskoka Meats store, which has a 100-mile policy—everything has to be within 100 miles—and they're really promoting local foods. Of course, we have about 14 fall fairs around Parry Sound–Muskoka that help urban visitors to the area to really understand where their food comes from, to help promote local food. So Parry Sound–Muskoka does have a strong history of rural agriculture.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It is a privilege to comment on the statement made by the member from Northumberland–Quinte West. I hadn't quite realized that he was from Warkworth—a nice little town.

As I listened to him, he made all the right statements. He talked about us needing to help farmers. He talked about the weakness of this bill. He talked about having the bill go to committee, where it could be made into something that would actually help the farming community. I am not sure, in this bill, what it's going to do. I've made statements about my love of the farmers of the community, of the food that we eat and all those things, but this bill contains a week that's set aside for farmers, which is already Agriculture Week. It sets aside that the minister may prepare a statement every year or so.

I think we have to do far more for the farming community than what is contained within the body of the bill. I am convinced that the only way we can actually help the farming community, help all of those people who feed cities, is to send it to committee and change the bill, and I hope the honourable member, in his two-minute reply, will tell us what changes he wants to make to make sure that the bill actually does something.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for Northumberland–Quinte West now has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** I want to thank the members from Toronto–Danforth, Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, Parry Sound–Muskoka and Beaches–East York for their comments.

I agree with the member from Toronto–Danforth in the sense that another issue that obviously is of concern of mine is urban sprawl and the development of grade 1 soil, great farmland and other farmlands that essentially eat away, if you will, at our future potential of growing food items.

Mr. Speaker, that's a part of what I would like to see in Bill 36: something that would address that concern. But more importantly, it's been brought out earlier in the discussion on this bill about the lack of any real intent in this bill. If the government was actually concerned with local food production and agriculture in rural Ontario, they would have actually put in place a bill with some substance. We're just drinking water over here in this bill. There's no substance to it at all, and so we would like to see what the government has.

But I believe that this government is out of fresh ideas, out of fresh produce, out of fresh products that they can

bring forward. I would say that this is the reason why they're bringing forward legislation that actually has no substance. It's not just Bill 36 we're witnessing here. There are other bills that this government has brought forward that have nothing to do. It's window dressing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It is my privilege to rise today to speak to Bill 36, the Local Food Act. With so many Ontarians struggling to put food on the table, I really think it's a good idea that we've having this discussion right here in this House right now.

I would call it a debate, but it's kind of hard to debate a bill with such little substance. It seems to have been hurried along so that this government can have a reason to put on radio commercials or hold press conferences or even have photo ops. I saw an article that suggested that instead of October, May would be an appropriate month to select for Local Food Week since “may” and not “shall” seems to be the theme of this bill.

I quote from the bill: “The minister may, to further the purposes of this act, establish goals or targets to aspire to in respect of local food.” What goals? What targets? Is there any criteria here? The bill may get results; it may not. Until more substance is added to it, we can't be certain for sure. It is possible to address this topic and include actual goals.

In 2010, the region of Halton enacted a local food procurement policy for their cafeteria, and the program is being met with success. I'm sure that the cafeteria is serving those great apples from the region that the member from Halton knows oh so well.

If you want to look at somebody who understands Ontario farmers, look at PC agriculture and food critic, Ernie Hardeman. He understands that to talk about local food, you cannot ignore agriculture. You must consider each step of the way from field to fork. The member for Oxford has done a remarkable job for us as our critic in this file. This comes as no surprise considering he's a former agricultural minister, back when that position wasn't simply a political prop.

**1740**

Last summer, he championed the PC Party's agricultural survey to ask farmers what issues they encountered day to day. They gave us great feedback that we incorporated into our Respect for Rural Ontario white paper. We heard from farmers who were having trouble paying their hydro bills or keeping up with paperwork due to increased levels of red tape, farmers dealing with higher taxes, and programs that were too complicated to get benefit from.

Their issues don't stop there. Most recently, I spent some time with local farmers at a round table getting to know their issues. One of the folks I spoke to was Jacques Tetrault. Jacques is president of the Chatham–Kent Christian farmers' association. During our brief chat, I asked him what government-related issues he was having. Without hesitation, Jacques mentioned the burden that the recent tractor tire fee increases have



placed on—you guessed it, Speaker—farmers. He had just gotten back from Cottingham Tire, in the great little town of Tilbury, Ontario, and he told me that the farmers there, and even the establishment itself, were shocked by the sudden fee increase.

As the PC Party has said all along, to have local food, you need local farmers. The issue of tire fees has received much attention thanks to the hard work done by our member from Kitchener–Conestoga, and it is a concern that is certainly resonating in my great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex.

The PC Party thinks there is a better way. To promote local food, we should try to make it easier for food to get from the farm to your plate. Food terminals reduce the distance that food has to travel in order to get to communities, yet there's only one in the province, which leads me to ask: Why aren't there more of them in Ontario? I know my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex, as well as southwestern Ontario as a whole, would be greatly benefited by adding a food terminal in the region. We've also called for a comprehensive Ontario food act that would lead by example in supporting local food by increasing the amount of Ontario-grown food purchased by the broader public sector.

How can we call this an act? It would be like calling a teaser trailer a movie. Yes, it's something interesting, but it's only a glimpse of the finished product that will be released somewhere down the road. The bill essentially says that the Liberal government supports local food, which is wonderful, but it's not a bill.

Another issue that we as a party have with this bill is that it would effectively do away with Ontario Agriculture Week. Somebody at the Ministry of Agriculture must have forgotten to look at the calendar, because the new Local Food Week falls directly on Agriculture Week. In light of the fact that many Ontarians do not know where their food comes from and are not familiar with the farming processes, doing away with this important week could have major ramifications.

The agriculture and food sector is one that is near and dear to me as a lifelong resident of Chatham, and one that is the backbone of my riding. Here are some very particularly interesting agricultural facts about the magnificent riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex; here's a little food for thought.

Did you know, Speaker, that there are 2,196 farms in Chatham–Kent, which accounts for 3.8% of Ontario's total farms? Leamington, which is in Essex but in my riding, is known as the greenhouse capital of North America, with an astonishing 1,500 acres under cover in that town. In addition to these farms, greenhouses in Chatham–Kent now account for 3.2% of Ontario's total greenhouse area.

One of note is Cedarline Greenhouses, which recently partnered with GreenField Ethanol to use surplus heat and carbon dioxide to save about 40% on heating costs.

Chatham–Kent is the number one producer of tomatoes, seed corn and pumpkins in all of Canada. We're the number one producer of sugar beets, green

peas, broccoli, lavender, cauliflower and quail in all of Ontario. Why, Speaker, did you know that we even grow 2.5-megawatt turbines? Oh, wait, that's not agriculture—but then again, they are built on farmland. They've inundated the region, populated rich, fertile soil. They take up rich, fertile soil, some of the richest, most fertile soil in all of Canada. So turbines—I know, Speaker: Although you can't eat them, they will drive up your energy costs to a point where maybe many will not be able to put good, locally grown food on the table.

Food production is also important to my riding. Heinz has a plant in Leamington that alone employs 800 full-time employees, with another 200 seasonal employees. That's a source of 1,000 jobs in a town of under 30,000 people.

One of my goals prior to becoming an elected official was, and still is, to bring food processing back to my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex. We've lost Libby's, Campbell's Soup, Hunt Wesson and the jobs that went along with them. Just last summer, I took a contingent of people from my riding to view the Institute of Food Processing Technology in Cambridge. My team left motivated and inspired and shared my vision for the great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex. What better place to go to appreciate all aspects of good, fresh, local food?

To truly support local food, you must support the farmers and food producers of this province. So far, all we've heard from the new government is the same old rhetoric we've been hearing for 10 years now. The more things change, the more they really do stay the same.

I have a saying, Speaker, which I think is very applicable here: If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got. The definition of insanity is continuing to do what you've always done but expecting different results. Speaker, this bill is insane. What does it really do?

At a time when we should be celebrating farmers, we find that they are instead being burdened by increasing hydro rates and a growing number of regulations that are making it more difficult for farmers to put food on their own tables and on the tables of all Ontarians. I value the opportunity to promote local food and engage in a discussion about the challenges that the agriculture and food industries are facing in this province.

This bill is an empty plate. Though some hard work in committee is needed, let's add some beef from the Buis farms in Chatham, and potatoes and some fresh Ontario vegetables, and while we're at it, let's add some delicious Lake Erie perch from Erieau to all of this mixture.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'm glad to join the debate, and thank you to the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex for his remarks.

He mentioned something that was kind of—well, very important. He said that a lot of the food processing plants in his area are no longer operational and they've moved out of Ontario. That's a very good point. We can tie that in to local food. Why not encourage the businesses that

are already here in Ontario to buy local food for processing?

One of the things that New Democrats have said should be in this bill is a Buy Ontario policy, so that government institutions buy local, food processors buy local, grocery stores buy local. That way, we can promote the economy and make sure that our food processors don't leave—and create jobs. Having a Buy Ontario policy is one of the ways New Democrats feel that we can support our farmers and grow our economy and grow our jobs.

We look forward, when it does go to committee—and it sounds like the members opposite also want this bill to go to committee. We would like to see that happen so that we can give our input with regard to supporting our local food markets and our farmers, and making sure that the food we grow gets into processing plants so that our processing plants can remain in Ontario and we can all benefit from fresh fruit and vegetables grown in Ontario and on our tables, once the food processors get them.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, we've had around 18 hours of debate. Let's send this bill to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm very pleased to stand and share remarks on the astute comments made by the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex. This is our right; it's our responsibility to take our time to make sure that we're on record stating the facts and making sure that when this goes to committee, people are dealing with the things that need to be dealt with. I look forward to addressing that in more detail when I start my debate.

1750

Going back to the astute comments from the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex, two things really struck a chord with me. First things first: He talked about the ridiculousness behind replacing agri-food week with Local Food Week, which has been proposed in Bill 36. Bert Johnson from Perth has been a champion throughout his entire career, and he started this, as was mentioned, 15 years ago.

Do you know, in my past life I was general manager of the Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative? Marketing dollars are very, very tight, because you try to pass as many dollars back to the farmer as possible, and when you're going to make people choose—commodity organizations choose, do we go full hog—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** —thank you very much—and promote agri-food week or the local food? You know what? There are not enough dollars to go around. It's going to be Agriculture Week because that's the only essence that connects food production with the farmer. We have to always tie the farmer in.

The other thing I want to touch on is the comment that you made with regard to the regional food terminals. Nothing is more exciting than being at the food terminal

first thing in the morning. How many people have been at the food terminal? Not many hands are going up. With that said, I've been there with many teachers and with the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program. We need regional terminals to make sure that local essence is felt across this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's a privilege to have heard the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex as he talked about his local community. I often have an opportunity to visit many parts: Leamington, some of the wine areas down in that part of the country. To see the local farmers, the produce and all of the greenhouses—the amazing thing is the row after row after row of greenhouses in and around the Leamington area, with the capital sign, of course, that says "The Tomato Capital of Canada."

He's right, too, I think, when he talks about people in the area being upset because the thing that they're seeing grow the most is the giant wind mills. I'm not sure whether they're fertilized or whether they're watered or what makes them grow so tall or so fast or so many of them, but quite frankly I can understand the frustration of some of the locals down there who have to look at that and have to look at the kind of farmland that is and was there being changed irrevocably, I would think, in many cases, with the sprouting of those mills.

He talked about the—

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** You should have voted for my bill.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I didn't vote against it.

He talked about agricultural week versus Local Food Week, and I think the point is well made there as well, that you cannot confuse the two. People already in this province have come to accept agricultural week. It is already dedicated to farmers, to farming communities, to the growth of produce. This will only cloud the waters, and he's correct in that. If the government is serious, they should choose another week; I would agree with him on that. I commend him for what he had to say, and I'm looking forward to my next trip to Chatham-Kent-Essex.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We now return to the member for Chatham-Kent-Essex for his two-minute reply.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I would like to, again, thank the members from London-Fanshawe, Huron-Bruce and Beaches-East York, and I would be reluctant if I didn't mention Kitchener Centre, but he just wanted to be on the record to let us know that we've had 18 hours of debate on this so far. It must be painful. However, it's not painful to the farmers in our community, because you know, to the House, what I do have to say is that—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Oh, now they're getting a little riled up, but that's all right.

What I do have to say is that I was part of a round table with our deputy agriculture critic, Randy Pettapiece, the member from Perth-Wellington. In that round table discussion, we had about 40 farmers. We had con-



gregated on a chilly day inside a barn, and we wanted to hear what some of their pet peeves were, what some of their issues and challenges were with regard to trying to provide food for Ontarians and to buy local.

You know, the saying “farmers feed cities” is so very, very true. Unfortunately, the people who live in the urban centres—some of them maybe never even have seen a farm before—don’t understand what’s involved.

Of course, these farmers are really upset about the amount of red tape that has been going on. I’ve spoken with a farmer down in our area who had an abattoir and was told, after a food inspector had come in, that he had to spend somewhere close to \$75,000 to upgrade everything and to get it so that he could still remain active in his business. He did all of that, and then they came back with different rules again and he had to spend another \$35,000.

Well, there’s so much red tape here, they’re making business almost prohibitive, and of course, they’re attacking the farmers. If you attack the farmers, we don’t have the food. So I think it’s very, very important, again, that this bill will go into committee. We will support it, but it needs a lot more meat and potatoes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, I’m very pleased to join the debate here this afternoon on Bill 36. So much needs to be said and be put on record so that the facts can be dealt with when we go into committee with this particular act, because this bill is very, very shallow, and if it is going to be enacted into law, there needs to be a lot of help given to it.

First things first: I have to let people know that I’m proud to say I grew up on a farm. It was a beef feedlot, cash-crop operation. I showed my first purebred 4-H calf when I was at the age of 11, carrying on the tradition of my grandfather Thompson and my dad. I have a brother who is an OPP by trade and a farmer by heart. Together with his wife, they raise cattle, sheep and goats for meat. My in-laws, my three sisters-in-law, are all married to very proud Holstein producers, and they work very, very hard alongside their husbands. And my husband and I have a purebred Boer goat operation. I’m really glad to say that Deidra is home from school, and she’s going to be able to help out with kidding while I’m here in Toronto.

I mentioned Deidra, and she’s home from school. This fall she heads off for one last year; she’s heading to Ottawa. She just attended Brock University, and she’ll be graduating from that on June 14. She’s heading to teachers’ college, and we’re very proud of her. Her focus: intermediate/senior biology and mathematics. I can tell you that agriculture will be taught in her classrooms, because it’s very, very important to make sure that food literacy is carried on in a proper context.

That’s the problem here with this particular bill: The context has been lost. Suggesting another week of celebration of local food, when we already have a very viable and relevant week that we have to celebrate because of Bert Johnson—it just doesn’t make any sense whatsoever.

The whole concept behind what this act has suggested needs to be reviewed, and that’s why I’m going to take some time and talk to some very specific things. On April 9, the Minister of Agriculture and Food first introduced this bill, and she said at that time that this bill is “about finding ways of raising people’s consciousness about accessing that great Ontario food.”

Well, Speaker, I feel we need to continue the debate on this particular bill, because we have to help raise the consciousness and awareness of the Minister of Agriculture and Food’s own file. She’s missing so many points. We need to fill her in on a few things, so I’m going to continue on with some of the comments that were made.

She goes on, in her initial debate, to talk about celebrating local food by proclaiming a Local Food Week. We’ve talked a lot about that. We don’t need redundancy. People’s dollars are hard to come by, and the reality is that Agriculture Week is perfect, leading into Thanksgiving, where we celebrate the people who produce our food here in Ontario.

Thirdly, how do we best increase demand for and access to local food from across the province? I have the answer to that, Minister, and that is less regulation. You know, I thought it was very fitting. Today alone I received two emails and I had one phone call conversation that spoke to the need for less regulation, more research, better support for farmers and a look at how to better manage the cost of production.

I want to share a couple of comments from Ritzema Dairy Ltd. I want to share this. This is about managing the cost of production. This concerned farmer wrote to me:

“It’s 5 to 1 on a Monday morning,” and she was worried. She worries about the Varna Wind project that’s going to be ruining her countryside, but she also worries about running her “milk business while enduring skyrocketing electricity costs, which ultimately come back to each and every consumer of milk in this province.”

There’s going to be a thread that ties all of this together. So much regulation over the last decade has caused the cost of production to go up, and we have to learn how to better manage that. I look forward to continuing this debate at my next opportunity.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1801.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Millroy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakubski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margarett R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margarett R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short





*Continued from back cover*

## **Road maintenance**

Mr. Peter Shurman ..... 1601

## **Doug Rollins**

Mr. Gilles Bisson ..... 1601

Hon. John Gerretsen ..... 1602

Mr. Todd Smith ..... 1603

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) ..... 1604

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2013, Bill 59, Mme Gélinas / Loi de 2013 favorisant des choix sains pour une alimentation saine, projet de loi 59, Mme Gélinas**

First reading agreed to ..... 1604

Mme France Gélinas ..... 1604

### **Wireless Services Agreements Act, 2013, Bill 60, Ms. MacCharles / Loi de 2013 sur les conventions de services sans fil, projet de loi 60, Mme MacCharles**

First reading agreed to ..... 1605

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **Consumer protection**

Hon. Tracy MacCharles ..... 1605

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 1606

Mr. Jagmeet Singh ..... 1607

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Land use planning**

Mr. Frank Klees ..... 1607

### **Office of the Ombudsman**

Miss Monique Taylor ..... 1608

### **Community safety**

Mrs. Laura Albanese ..... 1608

### **Workplace insurance**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette ..... 1608

### **Social assistance**

Mr. Jonah Schein ..... 1608

### **Tire disposal**

Mr. John Yakabuski ..... 1608

### **Water quality**

Mr. John O'Toole ..... 1609

### **Community safety**

Mr. Toby Barrett ..... 1609

### **Government's record**

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 1609

### **Government's record**

Mr. Ted Chudleigh ..... 1609

### **Services for the developmentally disabled**

Mr. Jack MacLaren ..... 1610

### **Ontario College of Trades**

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 1610

### **Air quality**

Mr. Michael Harris ..... 1610

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

### **Local Food Act, 2013, Bill 36, Ms. Wynne / Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux, projet de loi 36, Mme Wynne**

Mr. John O'Toole ..... 1611

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur ..... 1611

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 1611

Mr. Steven Del Duca ..... 1612

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 1612

Mr. Paul Miller ..... 1612

Hon. Ted McMeekin ..... 1614

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 1614

Mr. Jonah Schein ..... 1614

Mr. Grant Crack ..... 1615

Mr. Paul Miller ..... 1615

Mr. Ted Chudleigh ..... 1615

Mr. Paul Miller ..... 1617

Mr. Steven Del Duca ..... 1617

Ms. Lisa MacLeod ..... 1617

Ms. Catherine Fife ..... 1617

Mr. Ted Chudleigh ..... 1618

Miss Monique Taylor ..... 1618

Hon. Ted McMeekin ..... 1619

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 1620

Mr. Taras Natyshak ..... 1620

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur ..... 1621

Miss Monique Taylor ..... 1621

Mr. Todd Smith ..... 1621

Mr. Jonah Schein ..... 1623

Mr. Steven Del Duca ..... 1623

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 1623

Ms. Catherine Fife ..... 1624

Mr. Todd Smith ..... 1624

Ms. Lisa MacLeod ..... 1624

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 1626

Hon. Yasir Naqvi ..... 1626

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 1626

Mr. Michael Prue .....	1627
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1627
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	1627
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1629
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1629
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	1629
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1629
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	1630
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	1630
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1632
Mr. Bill Mauro .....	1632
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1632
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1632
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	1633
Mr. Steve Clark .....	1633
Mr. Grant Crack .....	1635
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	1635
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1635
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	1635
Mr. Steve Clark .....	1636
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	1636
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1637
Hon. John Milloy .....	1638
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	1638
Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	1638
Mr. Jack MacLaren .....	1638
Mr. Rob E. Milligan .....	1639
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1640
Mr. Grant Crack .....	1640
Mr. Norm Miller .....	1640
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1641
Mr. Rob E. Milligan .....	1641
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1641
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1642
Hon. John Milloy .....	1643
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	1643
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1643
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1643
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	1644
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1644



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 29 April 2013 / Lundi 29 avril 2013

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	1587
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1587
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1587
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	1587
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1587
Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	1587
Hon. Ted McMeekin .....	1587
Mr. Todd Smith .....	1587
Hon. Laurel C. Broten .....	1587
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1587
Hon. Teresa Piruzza .....	1587
Mr. John Vanthof .....	1587
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1587
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1587

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Government's record

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1588
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1588

### Government's record

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1588
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1589

### Ontario budget

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1590
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1590
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1591

### Ontario budget

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1591
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1591
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1591

### Government's record

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1592
Hon. John Milloy .....	1592

### Power plants

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	1592
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1593

### Rural education funding

Mr. Phil McNeely .....	1593
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1593
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	1593

### Government's record

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	1593
Hon. John Milloy .....	1594

### Automobile insurance

Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1594
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1594

### Agri-food industry

Mr. Mike Colle .....	1595
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1595

### Unemployment

Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1595
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1595

### Academic streaming

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1596
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	1596

### Home warranty program

Mr. Steven Del Duca .....	1596
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1597

### Northern Ontario

Mr. Rod Jackson .....	1597
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1597
Mr. Norm Miller .....	1597
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	1598

### Children's aid societies

Miss Monique Taylor .....	1598
Hon. Teresa Piruzza .....	1598

### Visitors

Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1598
----------------------	------

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Jack Burrows

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1598
-------------------------	------

### Hamilton Helmet Initiative

Mr. Paul Miller .....	1599
-----------------------	------

### Elliott Kerr

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1599
--------------------------	------

### Hardy Singh

Mrs. Jane McKenna .....	1599
-------------------------	------

### Healthy eating

Mme France Gélinas .....	1599
--------------------------	------

### Rotary Clubs

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1600
------------------------------	------

### Food literacy

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	1600
--------------------------	------

### Immunization program

Mr. Steven Del Duca .....	1600
---------------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*

100N  
x1  
D23



No. 33

N° 33

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 30 April 2013**

**Mardi 30 avril 2013**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 30 April 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 30 avril 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SKIN CANCER PREVENTION ACT (TANNING BEDS), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 SUR LA PRÉVENTION DU CANCER DE LA PEAU (LITS DE BRONZAGE)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 17, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 30, An Act to regulate the selling and marketing of tanning services and ultraviolet light treatments / *Projet de loi 30, Loi visant à réglementer la vente et la commercialisation de services de bronzage et de traitements par rayonnement ultraviolet.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start my one hour lead, I would like to introduce a few people who have joined us this morning in the gallery. I'm talking about Nicole McInerney—I did better with her name this time—Kelly Gorman and Joanne Di Nardo. All three of those women have been coming to Queen's Park. They work for the Ontario branch of the Canadian Cancer Society and they really, really want this bill to move forward.

Basically, the bill that we're talking about today will do a few things. The first thing that it will do, and it's the thing that the bill is best known for, is that it will ban young people—that is, 18 and under—from gaining access to tanning beds and tanning salons. Adults will continue to have free access, but anyone 18 and under won't have access, which means that when you go to access a tanning booth, a tanning bed or a tanning salon, they will ask you for your ID—very much similar to what we do for cigarettes or alcohol etc.

It will also ban selling of advertising for tanning services to people under the age of 18. So right now, if you go onto the Internet, if you go on web pages, if you go on Facebook, if you go into graduation books—graduation is coming, Mr. Speaker, so kids are getting together, putting together books from their years in high school. They sell advertising so that they can put the graduation books together. Well, this new bill, when passed, will ban

the practice: You will not be allowed to promote and advertise the use of tanning beds directly to youth, to people under 18.

It will also make it mandatory for everyone who intends to sell tanning services to tell the public health unit. The public health unit will now have a registry of where all of those tanning beds and tanning booths are. Because right now, Mr. Speaker, some are pretty easy; if it says Miami Sun, you have a pretty good idea they're selling tanning services. But for some of them, frankly we have no idea that they are doing this. You can go to a gym—I'll name GoodLife, which is in my building right now and has this great deal on. For a minimum amount of money you can tan all you want. Sometimes the tanning beds are at the back of a gym. Or basically we just don't know where they are. So if you own the equipment, that's fine, it's yours; you do as you see fit. But if you use the equipment in a business, that is, if you derive money from it, you will have to call the health unit, and the health unit will now have a registry of everywhere we have tanning beds. You would be surprised; there are a lot of them out there, not only in beauty salons and hair salons but also in, as I say, health and fitness types of places.

The bill will create a system of enforcement so that not only will the health unit keep the registry—you will have to register with the health unit—but there will also be a system of enforcement, so that if you don't check for ID, if you do provide tanning services to young people, then you will have a penalty fee. And some of those are rather substantive.

The bill also may create exceptions for medical reasons. Although, after having spoken with more dermatologists than I knew we had in Ontario—we have quite a few; I have realized that—none of them could ever see a reason why they would send someone to a tanning salon. So it could very well be this is a moot point, but we left it in the bill just in case there is somebody that we haven't talked to.

As you know, this is a bill whose time had come. Basically, way back in 2008, the former member from London—Fanshawe—not the present member sitting beside me but the former member—introduced almost the identical bill. In 2008, he brought it for second reading. Unfortunately, it died on the order paper. He and I reintroduced it as a joint bill, that is, co-sponsored between—he was a member of the Liberals—the Liberal Party and ourselves. We reintroduced it as a joint bill with the idea of really showing that this was not a political issue, that this was a basic health promotion issue that



we were putting forward. It sort of makes sense to have it as a co-sponsored bill, which we did. Here again, the goodwill of 2010 between two parties died on the order paper.

I brought it back in 2012—we're getting closer and closer—and by that time it had received tremendous support. A lot of the groundwork had been done. Whereas in 2008 and in 2010 there was still quite a bit of pushback from the industry, by the time 2012 had come, things had changed dramatically.

First of all, we had the association of Ontario medical students. They did a fantastic job reaching out to university students and really educating them as to the danger of using tanning beds. Madam Speaker, there is no such thing as a tanned skin; a tanned skin is a damaged skin. There is no safe use of tanning beds. The glamour industry is way more powerful than any one of us in this room. When they put a message out, oh, they know how to target their audience and how to be heard. They had all of those false pretensions about the goodness of tanning beds: "Oh, it will help you with your vitamin D deficiencies." It did everything but the dishes. None of that is true. There is nothing good that comes out of using tanning beds. A tanned skin is a damaged skin, full stop.

0910

The Ontario association of medical students had gone through universities and got the message out to all of the younger people. There was a very nice postcard campaign that I'm not supposed to show, but I will read. The postcard campaign was called "No tan is worth dying for!" It urged the government of Ontario to enact legislation that bans the use of artificial tanning equipment by youth under the age of 18. It was, "Show your support, sign a postcard," and it was by the prevention and screening network of the cancer society. This particular one came from around my riding. I want to thank Dr. Sutcliffe from the Sudbury and District Health Unit, who put together a youth group that went out and did education in high schools, where a lot of young women, mainly, make the decision to use tanning beds for the first time. What the postcard asked for was quite simple: "I support the Canadian Cancer Society's call to action for the government of Ontario to:

"—ban the use of artificial tanning equipment by youth under the age of 18;

"—prohibit the marketing of artificial tanning targeting youth;

"—develop and maintain a registry of artificial tanning equipment in Ontario;

"—ensure all staff operating artificial tanning equipment are trained on operation, procedures, maintenance, and how to identify people at greater risk of developing cancer, particularly those with type 1;"—that is, people with very, very fair skin, sometime with freckles;

"—require that signage be placed in clear view of each bed, clearly outlining the health risks of artificial tanning."

I forgot to say in my opening statement that this is also something that is contained in the bill.

The postcard went on with a little "Did you know?" box. The "Did you know?" said, "Exposure to ultraviolet radiation, such as that emitted from artificial tanning equipment, during childhood and adolescence can increase a person's risk of getting skin cancer both now and later in life.

"Melanoma is the second most common form of cancer in young Ontarians aged 15-34." Those were rather powerful words. Those postcard campaigns were done—there was a petition that was basically identical to what the postcard campaign had said, that went throughout Ontario.

Then came the cancer society. The Ontario cancer society in 2012 held a breakfast here at Queen's Park, in our dining room. They had dozens and dozens of very, very good and dedicated volunteers with them who came from all 107 ridings here in Ontario. They basically had a chat, a one-on-one, with their MPP to explain to their MPP why it was important for us to support this.

The work has been done, Speaker. The work has been done. Youth are now on board. They realize the danger that this is. They realize how powerful the glamour industry is for some of their peers and they are ready for protection. They are asking us for protection, and I think it is our duty as legislators to do that. How do we do this? We do this by passing this bill, the Skin Cancer Protection Act.

There were a number of other activities that had also taken place. Again, the great volunteers from the cancer society throughout Ontario would go to high schools and talk. I had the pleasure to attend some of those presentations in my own riding. I will always remember, we went to Lockerby high school, which is a big high school in Sudbury. They had arranged for all of the graduating class and the class before that to come into the gymnasium. There were hundreds and hundreds, close to 1,000 young people in there. The cancer society had found a woman who was actually the mother of one of those students, who came and talked. She came and shared her own story of her own battle with cancer. You could see that the students were listening intently. We then put out the message about the damage of using tanning equipment. Then we asked them to take a pledge. We knew that this would put a lot of peer pressure, so we made it comfortable for whoever was not willing to take the pledge. They all did, except for three just gorgeous young women, extremely tanned. The message I got out of this is that when you can share your message early, when you can protect them, youth get it. They know that nothing good will come of this. They know that they are partly the target/victim of the glamour industry. But once they have the knowledge, they take the right decision. What we are trying to do right now is to make it easy on all by banning them.

We've all had—some of them are too young, but I'll speak for myself. It was tough raising kids through their teenage years. My three went through teenage years like bing, bang, bang, all of them at the same time. I'm happy I survived that period of time. As hard as it was on them,

I think it was even harder on me. It's a tough time to be a parent of teenagers. They want to drive the car, sometimes when it's not appropriate. They wanted to experiment with alcohol when I didn't think it was appropriate. They certainly were under pressure to experiment with recreational drugs when I thought it was inappropriate. And they wanted to go out with people who I thought weren't good either. So you end up saying no on a whole lot of things to your teenage sons and daughters as they grow up. Then they want to get tanned. At some point you have to say, "I'm tired of saying no all the time. I don't want them to drink and drive. I don't want them to do drugs. I certainly don't want them to drink to excess. Maybe I'll give up on something—you know, to try to give and take with your teenager. And what do you give up on? It seems like tanning is something that you could give your support to and say, "Well, at least, she's not drinking and driving or going out with this guy that I really don't care for." So you give up. You give in, not knowing that what you're doing is increasing her risk of skin cancer by 75%.

I worked in a hospital long enough—we had a cancer treatment centre and I worked on the oncology unit long enough to know that skin cancer is no fun. The treatment for melanoma is no picnic either. The chances of death are right up there. Melanoma is not easy to treat. Once you have it—hopefully you catch it early, but once you have melanoma and you fight skin cancer, you're in a battle for your life. Unfortunately, many of them will lose that battle.

Looking back to all of those parents that are going through those trying years of trying to guide their teenage sons and daughters on the right path, let's take that battle away from the raising of kids. As legislators, let's do the right thing and make it clear that it doesn't matter how much you beg your mom, you're not going to be allowed in there. You are not to be allowed in there because nothing good will come of it, because a tanned skin is a damaged skin. And the damage just keeps on adding; it never goes away.

This is what we are trying to do here today. We are trying to have this debate on the use of artificial tanning equipment and how this industry needs to be regulated.

0920

Another part of the bill is that we will be putting clear signs, warning signs, directly on it, very similar to what you see on cigarette packages right now that spells it out in black and white: If you smoke cigarettes, chances are you will get cancer. Those warning signs will be there. Although youth won't be allowed to use tanning equipment, a lot of other people still will be allowed, so at least we will be giving them information that comes from a reliable source as to what are the effects.

The actual wording is not in the bill, simply because Health Canada has also decided to look into this, and Health Canada will be issuing a warning, will be mandating warnings, on tanning equipment. So if the warning that Health Canada—if we can coordinate our efforts so that we agree, then all the better. Not only will

there be just one sign; it will be clear language that will be throughout all of the different provinces and Ontario.

The need for this bill to regulate the tanning industry is gaining more and more support. I talked a little bit as to what some of the youth are doing—youth on youth, through either the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario branch or their regional branch, and through the health units in different areas, where they talk to one another. I've talked about what was happening at the university level with the medical students that attend those universities.

But the pressure to move on with this bill is also coming from the health care society, so I would like to thank the many groups that I'm about to read out. This group, of course, includes the Canadian Cancer Society. When the Canadian Cancer Society started to put their time and effort and energy behind this bill, I knew that we were on the right track. They have a way of recruiting volunteers, of training them, of doing peer mentoring that is just phenomenal. When they identified tanning, the regulation of tanning beds, and started to put their message out, it became very, very credible and very powerful.

The Canadian skin cancer association also put their shoulder to the wheel. Again, the skin cancer association is specifically for people living with skin cancer. I will highlight one such person, who I think a lot of you got to know. Her name is Kate. You met her last spring, the spring of 2012. Her name is Kate Neale. Kate is just, you know, one of those drop-dead gorgeous young women. She is very, very pretty, and she's very smart.

Kate started working for the tanning industry when she was in her teens. Kate started tanning quite regularly, up to 16 times a month, basically every second day, because—you know what, Madam Speaker?—in Kate's contract of employment, there was a clause that said, "In order to keep your job, you must maintain a tanned appearance."

Can you believe this, Madam Speaker? We are telling those young women throughout the hundreds of tanning salons we have in Ontario that if you want to keep your job, you have to expose yourself to a known carcinogen. Since 2009, the World Health Organization has upgraded tanning equipment to the highest level; it's on par with arsenic and tobacco and everything else. If you use tanning equipment, you increase your risk of cancer. It's not an "if" or a "maybe"; it is quantified. You increase it by 75%. So here we are, a young woman wanting to make a few dollars so that she can pay for her tuition, her books and enter the workforce, who is told, "If you want to have a job with us, you will have to maintain a tanned appearance." I don't know about the rest of you, but I can tell you that in Nickel Belt, in February, maintaining a tanned appearance is not that obvious. It is impossible to do this unless you go to a tanning bed, unless you expose yourself to a known carcinogen. Yet it was in her contract. Kate did not want to lose her job. Like many young women, she needed the money. But like everybody else, I can tell you that this year we've had the winter that did



not know when to end. I was ready to ditch it out weeks and months ago, but it stayed. By the way, the ice went off the lake on Sunday at 2:30, thank heaven. Spring is here. This aside, it was a long winter. How do you maintain a tanned appearance? You go to a tanning salon. You got to a tanning booth.

So here is Kate, taking all of the training that her employers were offering. She became extremely knowledgeable about all of the goodness of tanning beds. Then, the worst happened. Then she went with her mom to an appointment with her dermatologist. When she tells the story, she is able to tell the story lightheartedly, actually, because when she got to the appointment, the doctor thought that it was for Kate's mom, because Kate was so young. She was not even 20 years old. Yet she had developed skin cancer. Kate is now 22 years old. She has a big scar on her breast and a big scar on her stomach from where they did surgery to remove skin cancer. Kate couldn't attend when the Minister of Health reintroduced the bill because she was undergoing medical care. But Kate—not only is she very pretty; she's very smart—used her knowledge of the tanning industry to speak to her peers, to turn things around, to make things better. She's asking us to follow in her footsteps and make it easy, to make the right decision the easy decision: Ban it for everybody under 18. Put warning signs on it. Make sure we know where those things are. Make sure we talk to people with type 1 skin. Kate should never have tanned. She's one of those with the type 1 skin. Yet she did, 16 times a month; about every second day she used the tanning bed.

She talked about it. She said that after a while she felt like she had become dependent on it, that she needed her fix of sunshine, she needed her fix of exposure to UV. Of course, there is nothing we can do to change the past, but as legislators we can certainly change the future for the better.

I also had a chance to meet with the Melanoma Network. Melanoma is the worst type of skin cancer, in the sense that it is very tough to treat. The treatment can only be described as brutal and not always successful. There are many survivors of melanoma. Once you get them all in a room, they often have something in common: They used tanning beds when they were younger, not knowing.

0930

Kate's cancer developed really quickly, but the statistics would tell you that it usually takes between 10 and 15 years before the cancer will appear. So if you use a tanning bed when you're 16 years old, chances are you will be 26 or 30 when the cancer shows. At 26 or 30 years old, you are just starting your career. You finally finished school. Hopefully, you got a job that allows you to support yourself. Often, your first job will be a little bit more precarious—lots without drug plans, lots without job security—and you have to undergo cancer treatment. They are just starting out in life, and then they get news like that.

If you spend any time with the Melanoma Network, you will see that, unfortunately, a lot of their stories all

have something in common, something that we can change right here in this Legislature. What they have in common is that they used tanning beds when they were young.

We also met with the David Cornfield Melanoma Fund, which is basically a fund that helps people deal with melanoma-type skin cancer and what it does to their lives. Because, have no fear, not only is it hard physically and emotionally for yourself, your family, your loved ones and your friends, it also hits you in the pocketbook pretty heavily. If you haven't got a drug plan, be ready to get into debt. It is expensive.

The Ontario Medical Association has given their unconditional support. They are the ones who get to break the news. They are the ones who get to look those beautiful young women in the eye and say, "This weird-looking freckle there is not a freckle. It's actually skin cancer." There's not one physician in world that likes doing this. It is hard on the patient; it is just as hard on the physician. They know what it means. They know what the future holds. They know the hardships. They know that they have just hit this person in the stomach and that they are about to keel over, because when you are the one who is tasked with sharing news like this, nobody likes it. The Ontario Medical Association and their members would much rather we prevent it than that they had to share that news and then support their patients. The Canadian Dermatology Association is doing the same thing.

I must say that back in 2008 and 2010 Ontario would have been the very first province to bring regulation to the tanning industry. We're now old news. Most of the other provinces have done it already. You look to Quebec, you look to British Columbia, you look to the Maritime provinces, Newfoundland—they've already passed those bills.

Actually, it was quite something because when Maryse Gaudreault, who was an MPP for Hull at the Assemblée Nationale in Quebec, when they started to do their work, they actually came to Ontario. They wanted us to share the research that we had done. They wanted us to share our bill with them, which I did. They beat us to the punch because they took our bill, ran it through their Legislative Assembly, and not only did the bill pass, but all of the regulations and everything else have already gone through; it's already in place, it has already happened.

It feels sort of weird because at the time we were the leader on this issue. We're also the province that has the most tanning salons, in part because we have more people, but as a percentage we're also very high. The National Assembly in Québec did it, and they did it in a fairly short period of time.

There is very little pushback from the industry. Here again, I have to thank the good people at the cancer society. They did what we call on-the-ground research. What they did was they hired young people and they asked them to go—I used to know the number by heart, but we'll say 72; the number is about that—to 72 tanning

salons in Toronto. They were all underage, and they basically presented themselves and asked to tan. What do you figure happened? Do you figure that the industry, who had guidelines as to who they should and should not let in their doors—they had guidelines that they were supposed to post and show to everybody regarding type 1 and warnings—well, I won't keep you in suspense any longer. Nothing happened. The kids paid their money and they were allowed in. None of the warnings that were supposed to be there were there. None of them had done all of the guidelines. A few of them had one or two of the guidelines in place; none of them had them all. All of them welcomed their money and rolled out—it wouldn't be the red carpet—the heating lamps for them to go under.

I sort of did the same thing in my riding. I had 12 of them at the time; I have 13 now. I called them for my daughter, saying that my daughter wanted to go tanning, and if she would be allowed in. The conversation never lasted more than 30 seconds. Within the 30 seconds, it was, "I will fax you this sheet that says that you allowed her in." It didn't matter if I pretended she was 14, which she was not. All I had to do was agree to their offer of signing this fax—they had it on the Internet—or she could just bring a piece of paper from home and go tanning. None of them talked about "not allowed under 16" at the time. None of them talked to me about her skin type or anything like this.

The industry has been under guidelines for many, many years. It has not worked, which is why things have changed. Things have changed in five other provinces, and things are about to change in Ontario.

I had told you that the member from London—Fanshawe had introduced the bill. We co-sponsored it. I brought it back. Then the Minister of Health, in this session, finally brought it forward. When she came to see me—because she said, "This is more or less your bill"—to see if I was okay with it, I asked for one thing. I had no problem giving the bill away; it is not a partisan issue. I asked for one thing: I asked that it be moved through the House quickly.

As you know, Speaker, the government controls the legislative calendar; I don't. My second ballot, my chance to bring a bill for second reading, is not until December. Now that we have a budget coming, it probably won't be until February 2014. I don't want to wait until February 2014 before this Legislative Assembly does the right thing. I want us to move with this, and the quicker, the better. So when the Minister of Health came—I thank her for this—and offered this, I jumped at the occasion. She has the opportunity to move this through the House quickly, and I sure hope that she does. I will come back to this in a minute.

0940

I talked about some of the agencies that have supported us, and there have been many, many. I'll share some of the statistics with you: 16% of grades 11 and 12 teenagers use tanning beds. That is 16% of youth in Ontario who are putting themselves at risk of skin cancer

and melanoma. I'm no statistician or anything like this, but I can see a bleak future where 10 years from now, of those 16% of youth—which represents hundreds of thousands of youth—a lot of them will have skin cancer, and a lot of them will need our health care system to try to go through this.

When I mentioned the provinces, I forgot to—in the Maritime provinces we have Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, on top of Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec and British Columbia.

If we look a bit at the international market—because when you bring a private member's bill forward, you do a ton of research, actually—the first country to ever ban it was Brazil. Brazil has lots of sunshine, but yet there are people who fall to the pressure of the glamour industry and want to tan some more.

In December 2012, a territory of Australia called Victoria banned all sun beds, and by December 2014, a big part of Australia will have banned tanning beds altogether. It's not only for youth; it will be no more—no more, no more. Australia already has a very high rate of skin cancer. They don't have to deal with the winter that we deal with, and the people there are exposed to natural sun a whole lot more than we are. So a lot of their population have skin cancer, but here again, the tanning industry, the glamour industry, got to their youth the same way they got to ours, and the need to be tanned was still there, was still put forward in a way that a high percentage of young people, mainly young women and girls, in Australia do that. Australia is going way further than us. They are banning this altogether.

There is a time-sensitive period to this. The first one is when people go away for the March break. The tanning industry will tell you lies such as, "Oh, if you get a base tan, you won't burn as much. Oh, if you...." None of this is true. None of this is true. A tanned skin is a damaged skin.

There is another big push that is coming, and this is graduation. There will be lots of people graduating from high school, from college, from university, and those parties are becoming bigger and bigger all the time. Not only do you need the right dress and the right partner; you also need the right tan.

I'm really proud of many high schools in Nickel Belt and Sudbury that have brought forward the campaign "Cool to be Fair"; that is, cool to be fair-skinned. They take pledges that they will not tan before they go to prom, they will not tan before they go to a graduation ceremony, and more and more of them are doing this. But, here again, for 16% of youth, the pull of glamour is stronger.

When you do health promotion with that age group—I call them the "three I's": they are invincible, immortal and infertile—it's really, really hard to get any of those messages across to that particular age group. I don't want to leave it to parents anymore; I want us to do something. Because although they feel invincible and they feel immortal and they also feel infertile, they are none of the above; they are just like the rest of us. Some of them die



and some of them get sick, and you know what happens with the rest of them. The idea here is to take that away.

We're not asking for a big step. We're not ruining the industry or anything like this. Other jurisdictions are banning them all together; we are taking small, reasonable steps, which I would say most of the industry knows are inevitable. After Quebec, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Newfoundland and us, having had this bill in this House for the fourth time now, they know that it is inevitable. I would say soon, I hope this afternoon, we send this bill to committee. I would say that if we need two hours in committee, that would be about it. Because there is no pushback to this bill anymore. We could line up 100 groups and speakers who will come and speak in favour of it, and this is fine. I still want it to go into committee, because the people have a right to see the bill in its entirety. And if we can tighten up the language and do things even better, I'm all for that. But I want this to move, and to move quickly.

I've been talking about girls and women because they are the main users, but an interesting statistic is that 3% of men also use tanning beds and their skin is no different than the skin of a woman. They are increasing their chances of melanoma and skin cancer by 75%, just like the girls and the women who agree to use those tanning beds. But tanning equipment is more common among young women. You can see that it decreases as you stop buying the glamour magazines; it follows the same age range: 26% of women between the age of 16 and 24 years old use tanning beds—26%; I told you the statistic. In 10 years from whatever age they are now, chances are—I don't wish any harm upon anybody, but chances are some of them will be going through a very tough time. And it decreases: 7% of women age 45 to 64. I don't want to wait till they're 64 before we get the message across. Those statistics come from the Ontario Sun Safety Working Group and are dated 2010. I'm taking a pretty sure bet that the curve has not gone down. Unless we do something, it will continue.

In the last two decades, we've diagnosed 80,000 new skin cancers every single year. I'll let that sink in: 80,000 people get a diagnosis of skin cancer. Everybody's starting to do the math: 365 days; that means many, many people every day are faced with the news that they now have skin cancer. The most common cancer for people aged 15 to 29 is skin cancer.

Let's look at the economics of that. It's pretty daunting. Right now we're looking at close to \$1 billion a year in care. That is just the care that is paid for by the government. It's actually \$922 million. This is based on 2010, called the Economic Burden of Skin Cancer in Canada. This is a lot of money.

0950

When we're looking at how we can save money in the health care system—well, the best way to save money in the health care system is to not need it in the first place. I absolutely guarantee you, Madam Speaker, nobody will volunteer for chemotherapy and radiation treatment unless they need it. If you don't have skin cancer, no-

body—those 80,000 people? They're not going to volunteer for the treatment. We only treat them once they have cancer. We could prevent a whole lot of this hardship from happening, and it has an added bonus: Not only do you save hardship on people and families, you also save money within the health care system.

In Ontario alone, the cost of skin cancer—the statistics I was just giving you are Canada-wide. In Ontario alone, in 2011 the cost to our health care system was \$344 million. That's a lot of money, \$344 million; I can think of a few things that I'd like to do with that money in the health care system. I think a five-day home care guarantee would be a nice place to start, but I digress.

**Interjection:** Or a mental health strategy.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Or a mental health strategy—even better. I could think of a whole lot of things \$344 million could buy us rather than treating skin cancer in young people when it could have been prevented.

When we start to look at Ontarians, how do they feel about regulation of the industry? Well, 83% of Ontarians support a ban on indoor tanning—83%. I've been in politics for five and a half years, and that's long enough to know that we will never get 100% support, no matter how good the idea is. To have 83% support is pretty high; 83% of the people in Ontario get it. They know that this industry needs to be regulated. Of the people that were polled, 73% said that the industry cannot be trusted to self-regulate, 83% said we should ban indoor tanning for youth under 18, and 80% said that we should have legislation to regulate the tanning industry. I think it is high time that Ontario do this. The studies are there. The World Health Organization has spoken.

The guidelines for tanning salon owners, operators and users, which are based on Health Canada's 2005 guidelines, have not been effective. Health Canada did put out their guidelines, but they were not followed. If we looked at the website—you don't even have to go on-site; go onto the website of the tanning salons, and 40% won't even mention any of the regulations and guidelines from Health Canada. Only two websites—that's 5%—provide information about skin cancer risks. This is rather shameful.

I don't want to paint them all with the same brush, because I have been in contact with many, many tanning salon owners that have come to see me, and many of them get it. Many of them realize that they are not all the same—some of them want to do the right thing, but then, they work within an industry, and if their competitors across the street are opening their doors to girls of 16 and 17, and they are doing the right thing and turning them away, they're not going to be in business for very long. Those operators do want the industry to be regulated, and a lot of them out there are quite willing to do the right thing. They know what the right thing is, and they're quite willing to do it.

But as it stands, because it's not regulated in Ontario, you can see the constant reaching out to youth. If you look at social media, the tanning industry is all over social media. Whether you talk about Twitter or Face-

book or YouTube, everywhere youth gather, you will see the tanning industry. They need to be regulated, and this is what this bill will do.

I would say that in 2008, in 2010, it could have been unpleasant politically because the industry was still fighting this quite a bit. They still wanted us to believe that there was some good coming out of a tanned skin, that a base tan was something good, that vitamin D was something that Ontarians needed. They've changed their tune about this.

The cancer society has done its work, it has done this research and it has been phenomenal at educating people to basically put a clear message out: A tanned skin is a damaged skin; there is no safe tan. If you repeat it enough times, people get it. But the industry still needs to be regulated.

Avant de conclure, j'aimerais vous parler d'une campagne que le Service de santé publique de Sudbury avait commencée. Je suis très fière de la D<sup>re</sup> Penny Sutcliffe, qui est notre médecin-hygiéniste à Sudbury, pour le district de Sudbury, qui avait lancé la campagne de cartes postales. La carte postale s'appelle « Se faire bronzer ne vaut pas le risque de mourir! ». C'était une carte postale qu'un groupe du bureau de santé publique de Sudbury avait commencée, mais c'est une campagne qui s'est propagée à la grandeur de la province où des jeunes des écoles secondaires portaient avec leurs cartes postales et demandaient à leurs pairs—c'est-à-dire d'autres étudiants du secondaire et parfois du collégial—de signer les cartes postales. La carte postale dit : « Faites pression auprès du gouvernement de l'Ontario pour qu'il décrète une loi interdisant l'usage d'équipement de bronzage artificiel par les jeunes de moins de 18 ans. Montrez votre appui en signant une carte postale. » Puis, cela avait leur logo.

Ce qu'ils demandent est exactement ce qu'on a dans le projet de loi : « J'appuie "l'appel à l'action" de la Société canadienne du cancer, division de l'Ontario, qui demande au gouvernement de l'Ontario :

« —d'interdire l'usage de l'équipement de bronzage artificiel par les jeunes de moins de 18 ans »—ça c'est la partie de la loi que les gens connaissent le mieux;

« —d'interdire la commercialisation de bronzage artificiel qui cible les jeunes »—donc, dans les cahiers de fin d'année, pendant les bals de finissants, on ne verra plus d'annonces de l'industrie du bronzage;

« —d'élaborer et de maintenir un registre de l'équipement de bronzage artificiel en Ontario » parce qu'en ce moment, on n'a aucune idée; dans un salon de bronzage, on a une pas mal bonne idée qu'il va y avoir des lits de bronzage, mais il y en a dans des gymnases, il y en a dans des clubs d'aérobic, il y en a chez les coiffeuses, il y en a un peu partout. Maintenant, le bureau de santé publique va savoir exactement où ils sont;

« —de faire en sorte que tout le personnel responsable du fonctionnement d'équipement de bronzage artificiel participe à une formation sur les procédures, l'entretien et les façons de cerner les personnes qui sont plus à risque de développer un cancer, surtout celles qui ont une peau

de type 1... »;—une peau de type 1 : ils ont tendance à être très pâles, et parfois ils ont des taches de rousseur—« et

« —d'exiger qu'une affiche soit placée bien en vue de chaque lit de bronzage, décrivant les risques du bronzage artificiel pour la santé ». Donc, lorsque tu vas vers un lit de bronzage, ça va être clair.

Il y avait un petit message également : « Le saviez-vous?

« L'exposition à la radiation ultraviolette, comme celle qui est émise par l'équipement de bronzage artificiel, au cours de l'enfance et de l'adolescence peut augmenter les risques de développer un cancer de la peau, maintenant et plus tard dans la vie. »

Et le deuxième : « Le mélanome est la forme de cancer la plus commune chez les jeunes Ontariens et Ontariennes de 15 à 34 ans. »

Une campagne excellente.

1000

I'll use the two minutes I have left to say how important it is for us to move forward. We have a minority government. There is a budget coming. There are all sorts of rumours as to, will there be an election? Will there be changes?

This bill has the support from all three sides of the House. I was very happy to listen when the minister and her PA did their hour lead. I did the same thing when the PC lead was done. I listened to the comments that were made and the personal testimonies that were shared in this House of people who have been diagnosed with skin cancer, friends they know who have melanoma or other forms of skin cancer.

It is quite obvious that on all sides of this House people want this regulation to take place. People want this bill to go through. I hope that it is sent to committee, this afternoon, if possible, right after this if at all possible, that it has a short period in committee to tighten up and give people—I still want to give due process to the legislative process and democracy, but that it receive third reading and royal assent before prom.

The highest usage of tanning beds will take place between the last week of May and the end of June. This is when hundreds and thousands of new girls will use tanning beds for the first time. We have it within our power right here, right now today, to protect all of those young girls from going into a tanning salon and taking the first step towards what could be skin cancer, melanoma and everything. I hope we do the right thing. I'm counting on you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Question and comments?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm very pleased to respond to the remarks from the member from Nickel Belt.

I'd like to thank you for telling Kate's story. It's interesting. The weekend when I went home after the Minister of Health tabled this bill, my neighbourhood and lots of other neighbourhoods in Guelph were plastered with lawn signs asking people to come in and get their cut-rate tanning. Like, "Special offer. Come and get your tan." I've also started to get letters in my constit office



telling me that it's not possible for young women to get cancer so quickly. So thank you for telling Kate's story and explaining how a young woman who is vulnerable to skin cancer because of her skin type, if she tans frequently, actually could, as a young woman, get skin cancer, because that belies some of the information that is being delivered to my constituency office. I think it's really important for us to have that information about an actual case.

I want to say that I agree with you totally that we need to pass this bill quickly. The reality is that tanning bed season and prom season are one and the same. If we all work together to pass this bill quickly, to move it along quickly, to get it through third reading quickly, we can actually have a real impact immediately, mainly on the lives of young women but sometimes young men, too.

It's important for viewers to understand that in order to do that, we need all three House leaders to agree to have the vote. We need all three House leaders to agree to stop putting up speakers. We certainly agree with you that we should get on with this. All three parties have indicated they support—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Merci, madame la Présidente. C'est un plaisir de parler à la présentation d'une heure par la députée de Nickel Belt. How's that?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Not bad.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Not bad? It is a pleasure to speak to this bill, and it was a great presentation by the member from Nickel Belt. Sixty minutes is a long time and there were a lot of stats that came out during that presentation. Many of them are very important for those who are watching and listening. Unfortunately, I don't believe that many of the people that this bill is targeted at reaching are watching and listening to this debate today.

Having been representing the riding that Kate Neale comes from, the Belleville area—Kate is a wonderful person to be spreading this message. As much as the Minister of Education or the MPP from Nickel Belt or the MPP for Prince Edward—Hastings, for that matter, can stand up and talk about the stats and how people are affected negatively by indoor tanning, the best advocates and the most important advocates are people like Kate Neale, who can tell her story. She's 22 years old. She's a beautiful young lady who has been tanning for six years now and is dealing with the effects and the aftermath of melanoma and what that has done to her body. I know from talking to Kate that she lives in fear every day now, because, as you mentioned, there is that 90% chance of melanoma recurring, which it has for her, even after the surgeries that she's had, that have left scars on her body—this terrible disease that she's going to have to live with for the rest of her life. It's so important that people like Kate are out there and spreading the message of how dangerous indoor tanning is.

I especially appreciate the remarks from France Gélinas where she said that not all of these tanning bed owners should be painted with the same brush, because there are some good ones out there. But this is a very

dangerous thing affecting our community, and we look forward to supporting this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The member for Kitchener—Waterloo.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure, actually, to stand up and follow the member from Nickel Belt. Her advocacy on this file is to be commended. She has shown great resilience in reaching out across the entire province to secure support.

It's hard not to be a little bit frustrated. This could have happened in 2008. But you know, we have an opportunity before us to actually do something about this. As the Minister of Education mentioned, it's going to take all the House leaders to accelerate, if you will, and make up for lost time on this front. I think that this can be achieved, especially given the political context of moving into a very high-pressure discussion around the budget process. So I share the enthusiasm from the member from Nickel Belt to sort of get this done and get this done today, and get it to committee, fine-tune it and then get it into regulations so that we get ahead of the whole prom season.

I think that the people of this province support this, and they would support us getting this done today, because they've waited a long time. I especially appreciate the comments from Nickel Belt, as a mother of teenagers who are moving into that "No, no, no" season, as she rightly pointed out. I mean, I think that parents would be very appreciative of the fact that their children could not access tanning beds at a facility. I think that that is our job, and we can get that job done today.

I just want to say thank you to her and to the legislators in this building who have taken a leadership role on this: good work. The people expect us to actually work together in this way, so let's get this done. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Moi aussi, je voudrais féliciter la députée de Nickel Belt pour sa présentation. Je pense que c'est très important aujourd'hui qu'on travaille tous ensemble pour prévenir les cancers dans le futur parce que le cancer n'apparaît pas tout de suite. Le cancer de la peau, on dit que ça commence même chez les bébés—alors un conseil aux parents de ne pas exposer leur bébé et de mettre de la crème solaire.

Puis, il n'y a pas de meilleur temps que présentement pour lancer le message, non pas seulement aux jeunes, mais aux parents aussi. C'est le temps des graduations. C'est le temps où les jeunes filles voient dans les magazines—et elles sont les plus influençables à cet âge-ci.

On sait, comme parents—on dit que les parents sont toujours en train de dire «non, non, non», mais on a besoin de toute une communauté pour envoyer ce message-là.

So I'm very impressed with the presentation of my friend from Nickel Belt.

I have two concerns. The first concern is about the medical exemption, because as a former Minister of

Community and Social Services, you cannot always trust 100% the medical community, who will have clinics like the special diet clinic—some doctor has a clinic and they will sign; they don't know the individual, but they will sign. So I want this to be raised at committee.

The second thing that I would like to see at committee is it should be “No, no, no,” that an employer would put in a verbal or written contract—because a contract is not always written; verbal and written contracts—that the employee should use the tanning salon.

I trust that this will go to committee sooner than later and these two topics will be discussed at committee. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Nickel Belt has two minutes to respond.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I'd like to thank the Minister of Education, the member from Prince Edwards–Hastings, my colleague from Kitchener–Waterloo et la ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels et désignée aux services en français pour leurs commentaires.

I think the time has come. You've heard the comments around this room. Everybody agrees that the industry needs regulation, that the bill we have in front of us is a good foundation to do this. Do we need a little bit of tweaking? Every bill can be improved. Let's send it to committee today so that we can do the last tweaking and it goes through third reading and royal assent before prom season comes.

One of the comments that I had made was that people who work in the industry are under contract to maintain a tanned appearance. We cannot stand idly by when workers have no choice but to either lose their job or to expose themselves to a known carcinogen. This has to change.

The foundation of the bill that we have in front of us is something that we have worked on since 2008. The groundwork of the health promotion initiative has been done. I cannot thank enough the people from the cancer society, dermatology, medical association, nurses' association, health units, all of the students who participated, and the Ontario Medical Students Association for their help. I had a long, long list and I can't find it. We had so many people help along the way. The work is done. The people of Ontario are ready for this. The industry is ready for this. What are we waiting for? The time is now. It will make a huge difference in the lives of many young women.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Introduction of guests? The member from London—no. I'm looking at three other people at the same time.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Because you said that, Whitby—Oshawa.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'd like to welcome several members from Advocis, who are joining us in the gallery today: Mr. Jack Snedden and Wayne Daley from Whitby, and Alex Fischer from the great riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to introduce a few members from my community who are sitting in the members' east gallery today: from the Wise Advisory Group, Julian Wise, Kim Sevcik and David Stewart; from Qualified Financial Services, Denise Vitellaro Turner; and from Bearing Capital Partners, Jamie Sevcik. Please welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's my pleasure this morning to introduce a former page of this assembly and also the daughter of a former well-esteem agriculture minister, much loved by every member of this assembly and previous assemblies: Roxane Villeneuve Robertson.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'd like to welcome Kris Birschard from Advocis, from the wonderful Blackburn Hamlet in the riding of Ottawa–Orléans. Welcome, Kris.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It's an honour to introduce the warden of Middlesex county who's joining us today, Brad Richards; the CAO of Middlesex county, Bill Rayburn; and also a good friend of mine from London, from Wernham Wealth Management, Ted Wernham. Welcome.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'd like to welcome from my riding of Pickering–Scarborough East, Claude Rochefort from Advocis to the Ontario Legislature today. I look forward to meeting with him this afternoon. Thank you, Claude.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I too would like to welcome a few members from the region of Waterloo here today with Advocis: Alan Anderson, Darren Sweeney and Dennis Yanke. Welcome to the Legislature. I look forward to meeting with you today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions? The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington. I got it all?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** You got it all.

Thank you very much, Speaker. It's my pleasure to welcome and introduce to the House—I had a lovely meeting with some representatives from Advocis today in my office, and I look forward to them having a great day, as I am sure they are, at Queen's Park today: David McGruer, John Saikaley, Richard Chartrand, Roger Rhodes, Jacques Duplain and Sean Lawrence. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I'd like to introduce a Willowdale constituent, Sonny Goldstein, who's here for Advocis Day.

It's the annual Queen's Park day for the Financial Advisors Association of Canada. I remind members there is a Queen's Park reception today at 5 p.m., and all are welcome.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to welcome a good friend of mine to the Legislature today, here for Advocis



Day as well, a well-known financial investor from Belleville: Shannon Neely, who's sitting next to the daughter of the former Agriculture Minister Noble Villeneuve, Roxane Villeneuve.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's my pleasure to introduce the family of page Fiona Marshall Young: Kristin Marshall, Paul Young, Michelle Young, Waverly Chow and Lisa Chow.

**Mr. Rick Bartolucci:** I'm privileged to introduce Allain Labelle and Michael Vagnini from Advocis. A little historical perspective: Michael Vagnini is a former student of mine who attended my office often for some sound advice, so we welcome him warmly—and Allain warmly—to the Legislature.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to welcome John Willoughby, president of Advocis.

I'd also like to recognize Tenzin Shomar, who's the page captain today. His parents also join us—that's Phurbu and Tsering—and sister Dephel. They are in the gallery here watching Tenzin as page captain today.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I am delighted to welcome Brad Richards—he is the warden of Middlesex county—and Bill Rayburn, the CAO. Welcome, please, to both of you gentlemen. Thank you.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I also want to extend a welcome to the members of Advocis who are here with us today: Mr. Peter Tzanetakakis, the vice-president, government and corporate relations, for Advocis; and my life insurance agent, Roger McMillan. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There's a joke in that, but I'll just bypass that and move right along.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I'd like to welcome today Linda Gratton, who is part of the Advocis group from Peterborough.

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Well, it's that time. I would ask all members to join me in welcoming this group of legislative pages serving in the second session of the 40th Parliament.

Please assemble.

See how quickly they did that.

Brendan Adamo from Mississauga—Brampton South; Eve Cassavoy from Scarborough Southwest; Ethan Chisamore-Johnston from Newmarket—Aurora; Benjamin Comley from Niagara West—Glanbrook; Jack Dawson from London West; Gabriel Demizio from Niagara Falls; Victoria Farkas from St. Paul's; Megan Gauvreau from Sudbury; Kelly Ge from Scarborough—Agincourt; Madison Hogg from Beaches—East York; Brigid Howard-Waddingham from Eglinton—Lawrence; Fiona Marshall Young from Toronto—Danforth; Chedi Mbaga from Trinity—Spadina; Samantha McCluskey from Etobicoke—Lakeshore; Simon Osak from York Centre; Karinna Pe from Willowdale; Shruti Sandhu from Thornhill; Anjali Sharma from Markham—Unionville; Tenzin Shomar from Durham; and Daniel Starrett from Whitby—Oshawa.

These are your pages for this session.

*Applause.*

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Premier, this morning, the Ontario Power Authority's CEO, Colin Andersen, brought a spreadsheet to the justice committee that showed the cost of the Oakville cancellation to be \$1.1 billion, less any savings. I'm sorry he had to disclose that on you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Order. Thank you.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** That's \$1.1 billion, less any savings, for a net cost potentially of \$310 million.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The member from Willowdale will come to order, and I'll start identifying individuals. That includes members on all sides. I'm trying to get control.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** They're not used to the truth over there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew has just got himself a little deeper than I think he wants to. I'm seeking your co-operation. I will identify individuals from here on in.

Please finish your question.

1040

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you. I asked him if the government knew it was more than \$40 million, and he said yes. And when I asked him who in the government knew, Speaker, his answer was one word: Everybody.

Premier, will you now apologize to Ontarians for not telling them what you've known all along about this gas plant scandal?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, all parties, first of all, opposed the Oakville facility. The government honoured its commitment to the people of Oakville and renegotiated—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The opposite of Bad Boy: Everybody.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. As I've tried to indicate to you, it does go both ways, and it is starting to happen that way. So, the member from Renfrew, for the second time, would you please come to order?

Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, the government honoured its commitment to the people of Oakville and renegotiated the Oakville facility. In September 2012, the Ontario Power Authority posted on its website the memorandum of understanding and a 216-page contract. That contract identified sunk costs and also contemplated a wide range of other costs. That was there for the whole world to see in September 2012.

The Auditor General, in his Mississauga report—it was very, very clear from that that these are very complex calculations—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, given what we've heard this morning, I hope you're not going to follow the path of the other Liberal witnesses who have appeared before the justice committee when you testify today. They've either all developed sudden-onset selective amnesia, or they just plain didn't tell the whole truth to the committee. One admitted to destroying documents illegally, while another ordered the OPA to withhold documents. We heard that this morning from Colin Andersen again.

Ontarians are fed up with this obstructive nature and are fed up with the Liberals taking care of their political whims with hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer and ratepayer money.

Premier, how can you expect to maintain the confidence of this House and Ontarians when you knew all along your numbers were false?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Energy?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I'll continue the answer that I was in the middle of before.

What's clear from today, as well as from the previous auditor's report, is that the calculations are very, very difficult—so complex that this morning at committee, the OPA acknowledged an estimate that it made about four weeks ago with a particular cost; it had a different cost today. The consultant that was referred to in the particular report also had a different cost figure. The opposition has a different cost figure.

That's why the Premier asked the Auditor General to come and do a report: because we need an independent, reliable figure that we can count on, moving forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, I asked Colin Andersen who in the government knew the cost of cancelling Oakville would be more than \$40 million. His answer was: Everybody.

Premier, there is nowhere for you to go now except to come this afternoon and tell the truth. You've known about the costs for months and yet have stood in this Legislature—you and your ministers—and told us something different. Behaviour like that is why you do not have the confidence of Ontarians, nor should you.

Premier, what are you going to tell us this afternoon that you couldn't have told us a year ago?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, in September 2012 the whole world knew there were extra costs. It was on the OPA website. A 216-page contract identified sunk costs. They identified that there will be more calculations and more costs to come.

The critic—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will come to this side and say the same. I'll start identifying you in-

dividually. My ear is pretty good. I don't even have to see you sometimes.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, we agree with him. The whole world knew there were additional costs; it was on the website. The critic stands up and he misrepresents—he speaks—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let me do my job, please.

The member will withdraw.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

But what I will say is that he uses selective facts and selective quotes without completing the sentence, without stating that the whole world knew there were additional costs. There was a 216-page contract. If he didn't read it in September 2012, that's his problem. Do your job right.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Chatham will come to order.

New question.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, Colin Andersen from the Ontario Power Authority said that your Oakville gas plant decision is at least \$310 million. That's eight times the amount you stood and told this House.

Ontarians are disgusted, and what's even more disgusting is the Premier's arrogance by saying this week that this House only gets one confidence vote, and that that will be the budget. That's her decision; forget the parliamentary rights of the rest of you.

The budget to be tabled will be overseen by a Premier who's been rather "liberal" with the truth—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. You can't say indirectly what you can't say indirectly, so I'm asking the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker—and it will be tabled by a Minister of Finance whose seat was bought by one of the gas plant decisions. I ask the Premier: Do you honestly believe that this House has confidence in your government? If so, then why don't you call the non-confidence motion right now and test your theory?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Energy, come to order, please.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've been very clear on the issue of confidence. I believe that the budget is an imminent and an important opportunity for the Legislature to express confidence or non-confidence in the



government. I really hope that the members opposite will read the budget and then they will make their decision.

I just want to say this: I will appear before the committee this afternoon, but whether I'm in this House, whether I'm in the hall speaking to media, whether I'm at an event in some part of the province, I always tell the truth, the truth that I know, absolutely—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I understand the members opposite are in a position today that they want to undermine that statement, but the reality is, that is the truth.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Well, Premier, you chaired the meeting where the Oakville cancellation was approved. You signed off on the cabinet minute approving the cancellation of the Oakville plant. You stood in this House and told us a dollar number that you knew was not the whole truth. Colin Andersen said just a few minutes ago downstairs in committee that everyone knew the true cost, and that it was much higher than what the Liberal Party and what you yourself have admitted.

I ask the Premier: Who's telling the truth, your—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Social Services, come to order.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** —the person who you put up as an expert and said that we should respect, long-time civil servant Colin Andersen, or you, the Premier? Are you telling the truth, that you didn't know the true cost, or is Colin Andersen telling the truth, which he just said under oath?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I believe that Colin Andersen was telling the truth, absolutely.

We called the OPA to committee to answer questions about the Oakville cost. This morning, as I understand it, the OPA provided two different cost estimates. Both estimates differ from what the OPA previously advised the government. That makes the case that it's extremely important that we have the Auditor General look at the books and determine the cost. That is why I called and asked the Auditor General to look at the Oakville situation. That's why I asked the Auditor General to look at it, because of the complexity that the Minister of Energy was talking about, because of the complexity that Colin Andersen spoke of.

1050

Every time I have spoken on this issue, Mr. Speaker, I have told the truth as I have understood it. I will continue to do that today and at committee.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear that the Premier stood in this House on September 24, 2012, and said directly that the costs of Oakville were \$40 million. The Liberals screamed and howled every time we, the Tories, said that it wasn't true.

Now, we can understand the Liberals wanting to buy off the NDP in an attempt to cling to power during the budget discussions, but what we can't understand on this side of the House is why it's in the best interest of taxpayers or the half a million people unemployed in this province to keep this government going, to in any way prop up this government.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have been caught red-handed and red-faced. Won't you get up now and apologize to the people of Ontario for not telling them the whole truth? You have an opportunity to do that. You have an opportunity to save what little reputation you have. Apologize and call the non-confidence vote.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think that the complexity that Colin Andersen from the OPA talked about this morning makes it very clear that waiting for the Auditor General's report is extremely important in this case.

What I want to say to the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, is that I regret that this situation has come to this. I regret that we are in this situation. We collectively, because every party in this House said that they wanted to make sure that these cancellations happened, Mr. Speaker. The complexity was not going to go away if it had been the PCs who had been implementing the decision or if it had been the NDP who were implementing the decision. The complexity around the costs of these cancellations was going to be in place no matter who implemented the decision. We implemented it. At every juncture, we were given information. That's the information that I relayed whenever I spoke on the issue.

When I came into this office, I said that we've got to get these questions answered. That's why we opened up the process; that's why the committee has had the opportunity to ask these questions.

## POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier likes to describe her government as new. People want change from the same old politics that have left them cynical about the work that we do here. Does the Premier agree that it's time for that kind of change?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, I'm not sure exactly where the leader of the third party is going with this, Mr. Speaker, but you know, from my perspective, what's very important is that I follow through on what I said I was going to do. I said that we needed to open up the process around the gas plant discussion, that we needed to make sure that all documents were available, that we

needed to broaden the mandate of the committee and make sure that all questions could be asked about every aspect of the decision. That's what I've done.

At different junctures, both opposition parties didn't want us to open up the process as much as we wanted it open. We've managed to get it open so that the committee can ask its range of questions. I think that's what I said I was going to do. I've followed through, Mr. Speaker. From my perspective, that's what the people of Ontario should be able to expect.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier keeps insisting that things have changed, but anyone watching the committee this morning, the committee that was charged with looking into the cancelled gas plants, can see that it's politics as usual here at Queen's Park.

This morning, the head of the OPA confirmed that the cost of scrapping the private power deal in Oakville was eight times more, eight times higher than the government claimed. Does the Premier think this will make people more cynical or less cynical about politics in Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I hope that what comes out of this is a better process, that we can make sure that this doesn't happen again. Because the reality is—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The fact that the OPA has had different numbers to report at different points is a real problem. It creates frustration. It creates a sense of insecurity in terms of what are the experts actually looking at and how do we calculate these numbers. So how do we make sure that in the future we have a better upfront process, we make a good decision about siting this kind of infrastructure?

But if there has to be a cancellation, I think we all need to ask, how do we better predict what the costs are going to be, and how do we avoid a situation where the people who are the experts, and they are the experts, on whom we are relying—that they are able to give us better estimates?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Before we go to the supplementary, I'd ask the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek to come to order, please.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, the Premier said she'd offer change, but instead of real answers and explanations, Liberals are busy trying to call failed Tory candidates to testify at committee in a desperate attempt to score some political points, and Tories table motions that will never be called for debate in this House. Does the Premier think this is the sort of change the people of this province want?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We also called the OPA to come and to deliver their information. We're trying to get—and I know the OPA came as an NDP witness, but we had asked that they come earlier. The reality is that we are working with the committee process, we are

trying to get the information out; we're trying to make sure that all the documents that both the NDP and the Conservatives have asked for are available and that everyone who they've asked to come forward are coming forward. I'm going to be there this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

This is not a political game. From my perspective, this is about making sure that people have the information that they need. It's about making sure that we find a way to work together and ensure that the next time around, we have better information, we have a better upfront process and the community is involved earlier on so that we don't get into a situation like this again.

## POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** In tough times, people are looking for some real sense that their government will put the challenges facing people at the top of the agenda, not the challenges facing the Liberal Party and their well-connected insiders. The Premier has made it clear what her priority is when it comes to facing the facts on the cancelled gas plants. Is she ready to admit that this just isn't good enough for families who expect more and better from their government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have said that I regret that this situation evolved the way it did, that we did not collectively have a better process in place so that the decision could have been made up front. I agree with the leader of the third party that this should not have happened the way it happened. I agree that we should have had better information and that we should have been able to pin down what the costs were going to be in the first place.

But the reality is, this is where we are. A decision was made that was agreed to by all of the parties in the Legislature, and we are having to deal with the fallout from that. I am not happy with that. I'm not happy with that at all, Mr. Speaker. I don't think the people of Ontario should be happy about it either. But what they should expect is that we get all the information, we learn from the situation and we put a better process in place next time around.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, people feel like they're falling behind, and they'd like some sense that the government understands their challenges and will put their needs first. That's not what they've been seeing here in Ontario. The millions of dollars handed to hedge funds so the government could scrap gas plants and hold on to political power is just one example. But when people see that money can be found for corporate tax loopholes and CEO salary hikes at hospitals while they're being told to pay more and expect less, they know that it's time for a change. Is the Premier ready to put people first in this province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That is exactly what our throne speech—and what our budget is going to be about, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to a fairer society, and I



think that the leader of the third party understands what that means. That means focusing on the education, on the health care that our citizens in this province need, that every resident of Ontario—every child in the province, every senior who needs service, every child who needs an education—has access to that excellent institution that we are so proud of in Ontario. That's what the budget will be about. The budget will also be about making sure that we have the conditions for economic growth, making sure that we are fiscally responsible so that we can deliver those services that the people in Ontario need.

1100

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** For people struggling with tough times, this isn't a game. It's millions and millions of dollars that could have been invested in hiring nurses, creating more home care or helping young people find the job that they need. When they open the papers today, they see a lot more of the same: top executives at Ontario's lottery corporation getting fat raises while people receiving chemotherapy treatment learned that their government refused to regulate the company that was mixing their drugs.

Is the Premier ready to get her priorities in check and not just talk about it?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of the third party, I think, knows it's extremely important that we absolutely put the people of Ontario at the centre of all of the decisions that we make, and to make sure that, as we bring our budget forward, we recognize that making people's lives better, making sure that young people have access to employment, making sure that people who need care in their homes get that home care, making sure that people in our northern and rural communities and the aboriginal children who are not succeeding in school get the supports that they need—those are the priorities that we need to focus on in terms of making this province a fairer society. In order to do that, we need to stay on track in terms of our fiscal plan. We're going to do that, and we'll be bringing that budget to this House on Thursday.

## POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is for the Premier of Ontario, and it's dealing with a very serious matter. It—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —not only with her eroding credibility but also with the confidence the people of this province have in her government.

I was at the justice committee earlier today when Colin Andersen made it very clear that everybody knew that those costs were much higher than 40%. I assume, as do all of my colleagues, that "everybody" includes you. You've known all along that the costs of this political—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of the Environment will come to order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —motivated decision were huge, but you misrepresented those numbers in this House several times—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member knows that it's not allowable. Withdraw, please.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Withdrawn, Speaker.

The Premier knew, as a minister and now as Premier, that that \$40-million figure she had been suggesting wasn't true. So, we have a serious question for you: When were you first briefed that this \$40-million figure was inaccurate? And can you tell this House why you deserve to have the confidence of the people of Ontario given what you have done?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the government House leader will want to comment on the supplementary because I know he has been following the issue very closely. But I just want the member opposite to know that no matter her accusations and no matter the tone with which she—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Somebody is making it too loud. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** No matter the tone in which she delivers the accusation, the reality is that I have said I will appear at the committee and I will tell the committee exactly what I know and my experience of the situation. I will answer all the questions and I will continue to do what I have done all along, which is to tell the truth. At every juncture I will tell the truth as I understand it—at every juncture, whether I'm here in this House or whether I'm at committee or whether I'm out in the hall—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The member from Lanark will come to order, please.

Supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** She can run and she can hide, but the people of Ontario have seen what this government has done. Don't take my word for it. Colin Andersen said, right in front of me at the justice committee, that the \$40-million figure was 775 times higher, and that everybody knew—his words; they weren't mine, they weren't the member's from Nipissing. They were her own hand-picked OPA chair's.

We know that Premier Wynne chaired the cabinet committee that signed off on the documents. We know that she was the campaign chair for the Liberals in the last election. We know she sat around the table when Colin Andersen said that everybody knew the costs were much higher than \$40 million. Then, she stands in this House on September 25 and continues to cite that erroneous figure.

The people of this province have lost confidence. They want to know: Will she put our want of confidence motion on the floor to be debated and to be voted on?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, let's start dealing in facts. This is what Mr. Andersen had to say in front of the committee this morning—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton will come to order. I think that's the second time I've mentioned his riding's name.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's quote from Mr. Andersen in front of the committee this morning: "The \$40-million number was the one used at the time of the announcements because it was the one that was very crystallized, if you will, at that point of time. But what was key in the sentence that you just used, the \$40 million in sunk costs—because that's exactly what it describes; it's the sunk cost, which was acknowledged all along as only being a portion of the costs. There were other elements that were noted."

Do you know what else Colin Andersen had to say? He said, "We have a board, and we talked about the fact that there was a very strong commitment on the part of the government and all three parties and the citizens in the area"—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton will desist, please.

You have a 10-second wrap-up.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Andersen acknowledged the very simple fact that the Progressive Conservative Party was out there on the campaign trail supporting the relocation of both of those plants.

## CANCER TREATMENT

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Yesterday, the committee heard from Marchese, the company that supplied the diluted chemo drugs to the hospitals. Marchese has always known that they were unregulated. Marchese actually told us that they had directly asked both federal and provincial officials to oversee their operation but they were refused. Why did the province refuse to regulate Marchese even after they were asked?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member opposite for this question. I think it's very important to note that Marchese did approach the College of Pharmacists. The College of Pharmacists reported back to Marchese that because these were not drugs that were being mixed for individual patients, it did not fall under

the definition of a pharmacy. Therefore, it did not fall under the jurisdiction of the College of Pharmacists.

The College of Pharmacists referred Marchese to Health Canada. Health Canada is responsible for the manufacturing of drugs. Indeed, it has a policy on its books that if a pharmacy does not fit under the definition of a pharmacy, then it likely is a manufactory and falls under the jurisdiction of Health Canada.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is still rather disappointing to hear the answer from the Minister of Health. It's as if the College of Pharmacists exists out there without the oversight of her ministry, and it's as if the grey area is still news to her ministry. These facts were known long ago. The reality is that the government chose to do nothing. To make matters worse, the government now seems to be putting the responsibility of oversight on the backs of our hospitals.

My question is rather simple: Does the minister understand that it is her job to provide oversight of our health care system?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I take my responsibility extremely seriously.

I do think it's important that the member opposite understands that Health Canada is responsible for the safety of drugs. I was very, very pleased that Health Canada has clarified the position and that we have introduced regulations—that the College of Pharmacists is posting regulations that will fix this problem. That will go a long way to fixing this grey area.

1110

Speaker, I am as concerned about this situation as anyone—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Lanark, come to order.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:**—taking strong steps to fix the problem.

## AIR QUALITY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Last week the minister released the 2011 Air Quality in Ontario report, which marked the 41st year of long-term reporting on air quality in Ontario. Research has shown that air pollution has negative health effects, increases health care costs and causes premature deaths. The 2011 air quality report concluded there was a decrease in the levels of air pollutants and that air quality improved in Ontario. This is great news, especially to the health of the youngest residents in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he tell the House about the improvements that have been made since the last air quality report?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, Ontario's air quality is continuing to improve. Emissions of harmful air pollutants continue to decrease. Air quality has improved significantly over the last 10 years, especially



nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide, three major smog-causing pollutants.

We also measure levels of fine particulate matter—tiny particles in the air that can come from a variety of sources like aerosols, smoke fumes, dust, fly ash and pollen. Yearly averages have decreased approximately 30% since 2003. Fine particulate emissions from industrial processes have decreased by more than 57% over the 10-year period from 2001 to 2010, and the transportation sector shows a gradual decrease of 23% over the same period.

The report confirms the actions we have taken, specifically the phase-out of coal, emission trading regulations, emission controls on Ontario smelters and Drive Clean emissions—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I would like to thank the minister for his leadership and sharing with the House the positive news.

Air quality in Ontario has improved significantly over the past several years. In the minister's answer, he identified some of the progressive initiatives that our government has undertaken which improve Ontarians' health, taking our commitment to the environment seriously.

Since 2003, our government recognized that the health of our Ontario communities, like my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, and our environment are a high priority. We have taken many steps to improve the air quality in Ontario.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can he explain what our government is doing to improve the air quality in Ontario?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Ontario's air standards, as you would know, are among the toughest in North America. We're still looking at new ways to improve our air quality. We don't intend to give back the gains we've made, and there's still more to be done.

Eliminating dirty coal-fired electricity generating units is the largest initiative of its kind in all of North America. Since 2003, our government has cut coal use in Ontario by nearly 90%. By the end of this year we will only have two coal plants operating, and by the end of 2014, Ontario will be one of the first places in the world to eliminate coal as a source of electricity production.

Our emissions trading regulations for nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide have helped to reduce air pollutants, and the Drive Clean emissions testing has successfully reduced emissions in our transportation sector, an area where reductions are needed and difficult to achieve.

Ontario's long-term energy plan is helping to improve our air quality by increasing the use of emission-free electricity, such as wind, solar and other forms of clean energy.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Premier. In light of the emerging gas plant scandal, where the government schemed to understate the true cost of cancelling

the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants and then took deliberate steps to hide who was responsible for deciding to cancel the gas plants, how can the Premier continue to maintain the pretense that her government has the confidence of this House?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, there's been a lot of talk this morning about transparency. This afternoon, the Premier of this province will be appearing before committee, as suggested.

After the arrogance of what went on across the way—and I hope there will be an apology to the Premier from the member from Prince Edward—Hastings, who stood in this House and said, "We shouldn't have to haul you before the committee like some Quebec construction industry snitch"; the member from Leeds—Grenville, who talked about playing calendar and playing games. Yet when we asked the Leader of the Opposition to be before the committee today, he was suddenly too busy. He may appear on the 7th or the 14th; who knows. When we asked Geoff Janosick, the candidate in Mississauga South, to come before the committee, he refused.

Mr. Speaker, I will go on in my supplementary.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. There's a moment in which it's difficult to find whether or not I can land somewhere, because everyone's heckling, even when the answer is being given from the members of that side, and when the question is being put on that side. You would help everybody if we all agreed just to stop heckling, and let the question be put and let the answer be put.

Supplementary, please?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Well, the Premier keeps saying that the budget motion is a confidence motion, but taken literally, it only pertains to the budgetary policy of the government, not confidence in an overall sense. In contrast, our confidence motion allows for a more comprehensive test of the confidence that the House has in the government, setting aside the political auction sales that the last two budgets had become in this minority Parliament.

Hundreds of years of parliamentary tradition dictate that any vote can be designated as confidence by the government, and any government that can't command the confidence of the House should resign.

By refusing to call the confidence motion for debate and a vote in this House, the government demonstrates that it believes it might be defeated if a vote were held. If they themselves don't believe that they can command the confidence of the House, what gives them the right to table a budget this Thursday afternoon?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Answer.

**Hon. John Milloy:** You know, Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing heckles across the way that this is a serious business, and it is a serious business—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Simcoe–Grey, come to order. The member for Leeds–Grenville, come to order. Thank you. Now you've got it.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, this isn't political games that we're asking these people to come before committee.

Geoff Janoscik put out a press release saying, "Unlike the Dalton McGuinty Liberals, the only way to guarantee this power plant does not get built is to elect a Tim Hudak Ontario PC government." We asked him to come before the committee to talk about the PCs' position on the cancellation; he has refused.

We asked Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan to come before the committee. She put out a pamphlet to thousands of houses saying, "The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party." This morning, at the last minute, she cancelled.

Will they work with their colleagues to make sure that these witnesses come before the committee?

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. Emails from Chris Morley, former chief of staff to Dalton McGuinty, show the Premier was briefed personally about cancelling the Oakville gas plant. Presumably, there was a discussion of costs.

Does the Premier agree that it cost a lot more than \$40 million to relocate the Oakville gas plant? And when did she know that these costs were much higher than her government was claiming?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the member opposite knows that I am going to be at committee this afternoon. I'm going to be speaking to whatever questions are put before me.

I will just say again that at every juncture, when information was given to me, that was the information that I related, Mr. Speaker. I talked about the information as I understood it.

But the reality is that, this morning, the OPA provided two different cost estimates. Both estimates differ from what the OPA previously advised the government. The estimates have changed over time. That is what the OPA said this morning. I will be at committee this afternoon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** For months, the government has claimed it cost \$40 million to cancel the Oakville gas plant. The Minister of Energy said on October 3, 2012, "Let's be very clear: The memorandum of agreement speaks to the cost ... and we know that the cost ... is \$40 million." Since the Premier was sworn in, she hasn't corrected that number.

We know the Premier was briefed by Chris Morley before she signed her name to the government policy to go into arbitration on Oakville. Why did it take months of public pressure and committee hearings to get the Premier to agree that the cost was a lot more than \$40 million?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** It was this Premier who has asked the Auditor General, an officer of the Legislature, to look into it.

1120

There was a bit of noise before, a little bit of enthusiasm. Let me share Colin Andersen's quote from this morning: "The \$40-million number was the one that was used at the time of the announcements because it was the one that was very crystallized, if you will, at that point in time. But what was key in the sentence that you just used, the \$40 million in sunk costs—because that's exactly what it describes; it's a sunk cost, which was acknowledged all along as only being a portion of the costs. There were other elements that were noted."

We have asked the Auditor General to look into it. As has been pointed out, a number of figures were provided by the OPA. Let's allow the Auditor General to do his work, and let's have the committee start to do some productive work to make sure a situation like this doesn't arise in the future.

## FLOODING

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Minister, Thunder Bay and the surrounding area municipalities of Oliver Paipoonge and Conmee experienced significant flood damage in May 2012. This flooding, which was reported to be as high as six feet in some basements, resulted in damages to 4,400 homes and businesses, affecting countless families. It also resulted in significant damage to municipal infrastructure, washing out roads and bridges, damaging culverts, and causing shoulder erosion and sinkholes.

Could the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing tell this House what the government has done to help the people of Thunder Bay, Oliver Paipoonge and Conmee to help them recover from this flood?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I want to thank my colleague for the question, and I want to recognize the people, the staff and the first responders of Thunder Bay, Oliver Paipoonge and Conmee for their tireless work during and after this disaster to help their community.

As the House may know, I was up in Thunder Bay last week, and I was able to meet with the mayor of Thunder Bay, Keith Hobbs, and the disaster relief committee to commend them for their swift action at the time of the flooding and their assistance to residents to recover from the flood. They acted quickly, they repaired basements and removed dangerous mold, and they ensured that residents were in a safe and healthy place to live. As a result of the hard work and advocacy by my colleagues from Thunder Bay–Atikokan and Thunder Bay–Superior North, I was happy on Friday to inform the city of Thunder Bay that the province will provide \$4 million under the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program to help the city pay for their response, and we continue to work with them today.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you, Minister. It's good to hear that we have support in the city of Thunder Bay and municipalities in repairing the damage that was caused by this flood to over 4,400 homes.

The minister mentioned in the original answer that our government is committed to providing \$4 million to help the city of Thunder Bay pay for these repairs to many of the private residents' basements. Unfortunately, there have been claims in this House that our government has only provided \$300,000 to the people of Thunder Bay for this disaster.

Could the Minister share with this House if our government has provided additional funds to the people of the city of Thunder Bay and the surrounding areas to repair the damage?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I appreciate the question. The province remains committed to providing up to \$17.2 million to Thunder Bay and area municipalities under the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program. To date, we have already provided \$3.5 million to help to reduce the financial burden of Thunder Bay and affected municipalities. These funds will help rebuild and rehabilitate infrastructure such as roads and bridges. It also helps reimburse individuals who have suffered losses from this disaster. We've also provided up to \$200,000 to cover the administrative costs of the disaster relief committee, who are volunteers who have done important work to help the people affected.

While I was in Thunder Bay, I was able to clarify the ODRAP rules, and when the staff of municipal affairs and housing looked into the estimates of those claims, we noticed they were on the low side. I'm glad to report that the committee will be re-examining its eligible claims, and I expect there will be an adjustment on those claims.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My question is for the Premier.

Colin Andersen's testimony at justice committee this morning was a scathing indictment of your Liberal government's scandal. He confirmed that your \$40 million figure to cancel Oakville is not even remotely accurate, and that the true cost is nearly eight times higher. While we have become accustomed to your numbers not adding up, even your finance minister must feel uncomfortable standing behind the fudged numbers related to these gas plant boondoggles.

Our want of confidence motion has been tabled, and refusal to call our motion for debate is an affront to democracy. Premier, will you stand in your place and commit to calling the confidence motion today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, Colin Andersen appeared in front of the committee. I've shared some of the quotes, some of the material that he talked about—the original \$40-million figure. He also provided the committee with a number of different cost estimates, which I think lends a lot of value to the move by this Premier to ask the Auditor General to look into it.

But again, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that Colin Andersen pointed out today was that he was very much aware that all parties of this House supported the cancellation of the Oakville plant. As I say, these are not political games. We asked the Leader of the Opposition to come today—a man who starred in a YouTube video, a man whose candidates put out press releases and a Twitter feed, all promising this—to talk about the work that they did, the policy work and valuations. We've asked Conservative candidates to come forward, and one surprisingly cancelled first thing this morning, while another has refused to go. So perhaps in the supplementary the honourable member can talk about his efforts to get them—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Same old spin.

My question is back to the Premier again. Premier, when you took the week-long mediation course, you must have learned that there are two sides to each dispute and a means to resolve every dispute. In case your memory fails you, I'd like to offer the following reminder: Your Liberal government told the hard-working people of Ontario that the cost of cancelling the Mississauga and Oakville gas plants to save Liberal seats in the last election was approximately \$355 million lower than the actual cost. The hard-working people of Ontario are tired of your government wasting taxpayer dollars in scandals, Premier.

The Ontario PCs have tabled a motion to test whether or not the people of Ontario still have confidence in your government, given the accumulation of the scandals under your watch. Premier, will you stand in your place, show some integrity and call that confidence motion today?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I don't see this as being spin. The member of Halton, Hansard, June 1, 2010: "The people of Oakville have told you they don't want the proposed gas-fired power plant ... and I agree with them."

The member from Halton, Hansard, September 14, 2010: "Oakville residents have called on you to change the location of the proposed Oakville power plant.... I have listened to the people of Oakville, and I agree with them."

The member from Halton, a press release, September 14, 2010: "Minister, will you move the Oakville power plant? I am asking the minister to consider moving this plant."

The member from Halton, Hansard, October 19, 2010: "I was pleased when it was cancelled."

Mr. Speaker, I could go on. Dozens and dozens of quotes from the opposition, where they put forward the exact same commitment. It was a promise they made and a promise we kept.

## CANCER TREATMENT

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Yesterday we heard from the London Health Sciences Centre, the hospital most affected by the diluted chemotherapy

drugs. Hospital officials told us they would never have knowingly used a non-regulated provider and that they trusted the safety of the procurement process.

There is ample evidence that the ministry has known about this grey area for years. Can the minister explain why her ministry did nothing for so long?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I welcome the question. I just want to take a moment to say thank you to the people from the London Health Sciences Centre who appeared yesterday and I think gave very thoughtful and very thorough answers to the questions that were put to them. This has been a difficult time for everyone at London Health Sciences, and I applaud them coming and giving the answers that they did yesterday.

As I said to the earlier question on this issue, Marchese did approach the College of Pharmacists. The College of Pharmacists informed them that they did not have the authority to regulate that particular activity and referred them to Health Canada.

I think what is very important here is that we are taking the steps necessary, in collaboration with Health Canada, to ensure that this does not happen again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Ontarians want to know exactly what went wrong and how this could have happened. For the almost 700 patients affected in London, the urgency is even greater. The hospital seemed to do everything in its power to protect its patients, but the ministry failed in its duty of oversight. Will the minister explain why she failed to protect patients in London when they needed the protection the most?

1130

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I agree that we—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to pass the test. The member from Lanark is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I completely agree that the patients affected and their loved ones deserve answers. That is why I have appointed Dr. Jake Thiessen to really do a thorough investigation so that we can get answers and we can take appropriate steps.

We're not waiting, though, to take steps. The College of Pharmacists and the hospitals are taking appropriate steps now, but we do await the more thorough review.

I also think it's important to note that Marchese could have chosen to deliver this under their pharmacy; in fact, the original contact was with the regulated pharmacy. They then chose to spin off a separate company that did fall into this grey area.

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've got a question today for the Minister of Research and Innovation.

Our government really recognizes that bringing leaders together across sectors is one of the best ways we can drive innovation. Our province is home to world-class researchers, leading institutions and very strong private sector partners that have helped make this

province number six in the world for the quality and the impact of its research. This research creates jobs, generates economic growth, and it makes Ontario one of the best places to live and work.

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Research and Innovation: What is our government doing to ensure that leaders across all sectors, including government, are collaborating to produce the best outcomes for Ontario when it comes to research?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member for that question.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Research and Innovation, I am proud to be part of a government that is forward-thinking and innovative.

Great advances can be made by sharing best practices, ideas and resources. Our government recognizes the importance of collaboration. Collaboration will translate into job creation, better health care, a cleaner environment and a stronger economy.

Recently, our government invested \$100 million in the Ontario Brain Institute. This investment will support a network of data on brain diseases across disciplines. Researchers will be able to turn information into clinical application and commercialization opportunities.

Data is an integral part of our knowledge-based economy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. I'm glad to hear we're investing in an institution that's doing important work in the area of brain disease.

I know that the minister was travelling in the Thunder Bay area recently to the regional research centre.

We all know in this House that collaborating and sharing information is critical. We can find solutions to our shared challenges if we do that.

Big data is a major trend in the technology and research communities, and it appears that's going to drive a lot of innovation. Some say that data is the currency of the new economy. Our ability to access, understand, search and organize information is important.

The work of the Ontario Brain Institute is a great example of the important work that can be done through sharing data.

Speaker, through you again to the minister: What other government investments are being made to ensure the sharing of data?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member again for that question.

Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the importance of data sharing. With our contribution of \$7 million, IBM Canada was able to partner with leading universities across the province to create the IBM Canada Research and Development Centre. Using state-of-the-art computing facilities, this centre is focusing on solutions for climate change, gridlock and also on mapping of the human brain.

I recently attended the Think Conference organized by ORION, or the Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network, which focused on big data. ORION members



can access a global grid of research and innovation and educational networks. Students, educators, researchers and businesses across the province can access and explore data and share information.

I am proud to be a part of a government whose investments in innovative, collaborative and forward-thinking projects is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** My question is for the Premier.

Speaker, the government has “known from the outset” that the true costs of cancelling the Oakville plant are exponentially higher than \$40 million. The Premier knew. The minister knew. The cabinet knew. The Liberal caucus knew. The Liberal Party knew. This government is rotten to its core. It's morally bankrupt.

Premier, the time has come. Will you call the confidence motion so we can put your government out of its misery?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** This is a Premier who, when she took office, immediately offered a select committee to the opposition. They refused because they wanted to undertake a witch hunt against a former member of this Legislature. This is a Premier who asked the Auditor General to look into the Oakville situation. As has been pointed out, the OPA brought a number of figures, a number of estimates, before the committee this morning and spoke about the complexity. Let's allow the Auditor General to do his work. This is a Premier who asked government members of the committee to come forward with a motion with the broadest search possible of government ministries and agencies to produce documents on gas plants, and they voted against it.

The fact of the matter is that we have a Premier who will appear in front of the committee this afternoon, as invited, and who has shown—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Be seated, please.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Again to the Premier: The NDP may be willing to excuse your failures and nine years of scandal, but the PC caucus will not. The Liberal government has lost the moral authority to govern. It's over, Premier. Call the PC want of confidence motion today.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We have media interviews talking about the commitment of the Progressive Conservative Party to cancel those plants. We have statements in the Legislature. We have press releases. We have the Twitterverse. We have the Leader of the Opposition appearing and starring in a YouTube video.

All we have asked is that PC candidates and the Leader of the Opposition come before the committee to explain their side of the story, the costing analysis that they undertook. So far, we've been stonewalled at every

turn. We asked the Leader of the Opposition to be there today, and he played calendar. We asked Progressive Conservative candidates to come forward, and they cancelled at the last minute or refused to come forward.

When will the Progressive Conservative Party show the level of transparency that the Premier—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, you will know, because you were Minister of Education at the time, that your government has followed an RFP process that has essentially put out of business small bus companies that had been operating for years in this province.

Just last week, we had the Minister of Education say that it was the perception of her ministry that in fact there were more small businesses in the bus business today than there were before. How does that square up with the reality of all those small businesses that closed down across Ontario, from central Ontario to northern Ontario and across this province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Yes, I'm pleased to respond. As the member knows, we've asked our school boards to move to consortiums so that they can consolidate the busing between the public and Catholic boards and provide a more efficient management of the service. Those consortiums then in turn have been asked by the Auditor General, who looked at this—and the ministry, I agree. But the Auditor General, when he did the first audit of school boards when we expanded his mandate, actually looked at school board procurement of transportation services and suggested that just having a contract that went endlessly on with no competitive procurement process was not an acceptable process.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'll tell you what is not acceptable: when the government decides they're to put out of business people who have been operating buses in this province for 50 to 100 years. That's what is not acceptable. There are bus companies in Barrie, there are bus companies in Cornwall, in Timmins, in Elgin and across this province that have been shut down as a result of this policy. Why? Because this government decides only the big international bus companies should be in the business of providing services to those school boards and to our children.

1140

I say, again: Will you for once get the real perception and understand what you're doing is killing small businesses in this province, something that should not be done?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think it's important to keep this in perspective, that since 2003 our government has increased the funding for transportation services by 34%. In fact, if you look at—because you mentioned small rural boards, we've actually provided, in this school year

that we are currently in, \$217 million in funding specifically to rural boards for transportation.

But you asked about what has happened with the procurement in those boards where they are doing a competitive procurement. In fact, where the consortium is doing a competitive procurement, we've seen the number of local operators increase their market share from 39% to 49%—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** My question is for—  
*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Order. It's never too late to be warned, and it's never too late to have someone named—never. Thank you.

Member?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Our government was the first in nearly a century to strengthen the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, in 2009. This is something I'm very proud of.

In Scarborough Southwest, we have many animal rescue groups, and they are concerned about the well-being of all animals. There was discussion last fall about how Ontario could ensure that we continue to have the strongest animal welfare system in the country.

Speaker, can the minister tell us what our province is doing to further strengthen the protection of animals in Ontario?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I want to thank the member from Scarborough Southwest for his question. I know that he's an animal lover.

After I announced a three-point plan, we consulted with many of our partners, including the OSPCA; the Canadian Council on Animal Care; the Ontario Veterinary College; the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies; various animal protection and advocacy groups, like Zoocheck; inter-ministerial partners; AMO; the city of Toronto; former employees from Marineland; and other animal organizations.

We have completed the consultations now, and we are reviewing the feedback. Our goal is the same: We want to start any required changes this spring, including possible legislative amendments, to better protect animals in Ontario.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Point of order, Speaker?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke on a point of order.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Thank you very much, Speaker. Earlier today in response to a question to the member from Halton Hills—and I would like to cite—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Order. That might be funny, but you still have to have decorum.

The member on your point.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I would like to draw your attention, Speaker, to standing order 23(h): "Makes allegations against another member." The government House leader made allegations that the Leader of the Opposition refused to come before the justice committee looking into the gas plant scandals that the Liberals have perpetrated.

I have in my hand, Speaker, which I will present to you as well, a letter from the Leader of the Opposition indicating to the committee his—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's enough, thank you. I will allow the member—and any member at any time can correct the record if they've made a statement that needs to be corrected. That is not my purview; it's the member's purview if they've made a statement that is not correct.

## VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would like to introduce in the Speaker's gallery today a guest of mine, the mayor of Brantford, Chris Friel. I'm glad you're here with us, Chris.

## CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nipissing on a point of order.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. I would like to correct my record. I stated earlier that the Oakville cancellation costs from the OPA were \$1.1 billion. I've just redone the math. I apologize; it's \$1.094 billion.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That is a point of order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** My goodness.

## NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member from Timmins-James Bay has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Education concerning bus contract RFPs. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands adjourned until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1146 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'd like to welcome Pietro Sostegno and Shannon Neely. They're from Advocis and they're joining us this afternoon.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to rise in the House today to recognize and welcome members of the Federa-



tion of Ontario Traditional Chinese Medicine Associations, a traditional Chinese medicine group that has more than 2,000 members. They're here to voice their concerns regarding the one-sided negotiations the Wynne Liberals took to regulate a very complex industry.

This morning, the Federation of Ontario Traditional Chinese Medicine Associations held a press conference and an informational lunch reception here at Queen's Park for all MPPs and staff to educate members of this House on the complexity of TCM. They've also brought in 12,000 signed petitions of individuals who will be directly affected by the implementation of the new regulations.

I've had the chance to meet with numerous TCM practitioners now, and I appreciate the amazing work that they do, not just for the Chinese community, but for all Ontarians. Let's be reminded of their remarkable contributions to our health care system.

I ask the health minister and other cabinet ministers to re-engage with the traditional Chinese medicine community and ensure the new regulations are implemented in a fair and mutually beneficial manner.

#### CARNATION REVOLUTION

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** It's my pleasure today to rise in this Legislature and commemorate a historic event and important day for many constituents of Davenport. This past Thursday marked the 39th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal. On April 25, 1974, after almost five decades of dictatorship, Portugal threw off fascist oppression with a peaceful revolution. Citizens, soldiers and children celebrated this victory by pouring into the streets and placing carnations on the uniforms of army officers and into the muzzles of guns and rifles.

April 25 is now celebrated in Portugal as Freedom Day. Citizens, politicians and unions come together and march in the street to celebrate their civil liberties and political freedoms achieved after the revolution.

Last week, on April 25, I was honoured to welcome and recognize revolutionary Colonel Carlos Alberto Évora Maia de Loureiro in the Ontario Legislature. On Saturday, I had the pleasure to join the Association of the 25th of April to celebrate the anniversary and honour the colonel with our local Portuguese community in Davenport.

Speaker, the Carnation Revolution and Freedom Day are important reminders to people around the world that peace and non-violence are powerful tools of resistance. They are also reminders that democracy is something we must cherish and work for every day.

On April 25, we join our Portuguese brothers and sisters to celebrate Freedom Day and the brave Portuguese people who struggled for democracy and peace.

#### ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I would like to inform the House that schools throughout York region, including those in

the great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, have begun campaigns to raise awareness for the need for new bone marrow and stem cell donors. Called Sarah's Drive for Hope, it was started by Mark and Leah Watkin when no bone marrow match could be found for their daughter Sarah, who was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia.

Because there was no match, Sarah had to endure an aggressive course of chemotherapy. Thankfully, the treatment succeeded, and she is now in remission.

Two teachers at Bur Oak Secondary School, Aileen MacInnes and Elisa McGann, and Aileen's grade 12 history class heard about Sarah's story and decided to take action. They hosted a donor drive at the school which was attended by close to 300 students and community members. A simple swab inside the mouth is all that it takes to enlarge the potential donor pool for all the families like Sarah's who are searching for a suitable match.

I'm pleased to report that the Bur Oak drive has already resulted in finding a match for someone in need. I commend the efforts of these two amazing teachers, their students, Sarah and her family, and everyone in York region who has participated so far.

To see how you can help, I urge everyone to go to the website [onematch.ca](http://onematch.ca).

#### VICTIM SERVICES AWARD OF DISTINCTION

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I rise in this House today to recognize and congratulate Dawn and Ed Novak from Utterson, in my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka, on being awarded the Attorney General's Victim Services Award of Distinction on April 25 right here at Queen's Park.

The Novaks have experienced something that no parents should ever have to. In May 2006, Dawn and Ed lost their daughter Natalie to a violent crime that was committed by a former boyfriend. Since this tragedy, the Novaks have made it their mission to raise awareness about the need for intervention in supporting victims of violence and speaking out on the issue of violence against women and girls.

Just this past week, Ed wrote a passionate, half-page article that was printed in local newspapers.

Many Muskoka high school students have seen their video presentation, *If Only ... Nat's Story*, which helps adolescents to recognize the signs of abusive relationships.

Dawn and Ed also speak at schools, telling Natalie's story and encouraging discussions on the topic of violence against women and girls.

Their important message has spread across the province. It will continue to resonate as community leaders and politicians recognize the need for action to be taken through efforts across the province and country.

I had the pleasure of attending the ceremony where Dawn and Ed received their award from the Attorney General. I would like to congratulate them and thank

them for their tremendous and continuing work to bring about changes to protect women and girls.

### BANGLADESHI PROTEST

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Last week, April 24 was a rain-soaked day, and it was my privilege and honour to be outside with a group of Canadians of Bangladeshi origin as they met in a silent and peaceful protest on the lawns of Queen's Park.

They were mindful, and I was mindful, that their protest was directed to their previous homeland and that the protest more properly should have taken place in Ottawa, but they are from Toronto and this was the easiest and best place for them to get to.

On that day, they wanted the public to know about the destruction of minority communities in Bangladesh. They wanted the public to know about war trials that have not taken place in the 40 years since liberation. They wanted to know about the arrests of those who exercise freedom of speech.

At the conclusion of their protest, they wrote a letter, which I had the privilege of sending to the Speaker. I hope he has received it, will read it and perhaps take some action on it.

They had a moment of silence because, only about a few minutes before their protest began, they found out about the factory collapse in Bangladesh that we now know has killed about 340 people.

As I watched them, as I observed their demeanour, I have to say that I was very proud of the freedom they exercised and the responsibility they took in Canada, their new homeland.

### PRÉVENTION DE L'INTIMIDATION

**M. Phil McNeely:** J'ai annoncé, le vendredi 26 avril dernier, une aide financière de 48 500 \$ de la Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario au Centre des ressources communautaires Orléans-Cumberland. Cette subvention permettra de poursuivre, pour une autre année, le programme ESPACE : programme d'éducation et sensibilisation pour la prévention des agressions commises envers les enfants.

Ce programme est unique en son genre. C'est un outil essentiel dans les écoles pour faire la promotion des droits des enfants et pour prévenir les agressions. Il est tellement important que les jeunes qui se rendent à l'école à tous les jours puissent y retrouver un milieu d'apprentissage sécuritaire et inclusif. Il n'y a pas de place pour l'intimidation et la violence dans nos écoles et dans les foyers des jeunes. Je salue donc l'initiative du CRC Orléans-Cumberland de mettre en place un programme comme ESPACE.

Les ateliers d'animation permettront de donner les outils nécessaires aux enseignants, aux parents et aux enfants et ainsi contribuer à diminuer la vulnérabilité des enfants et des adolescents face aux agressions.

Je félicite donc les responsables du programme au centre, M. Joffré Malette et M<sup>me</sup> Ketny Théogène, pour

leur dévouement. J'espère qu'un tel programme pourra voir le jour dans l'ensemble de nos écoles en Ontario.

1510

### MICHELANGELO PROSTHETIC HAND

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** Today's fantastic advances in technology, materials and design have put incredible possibilities within our grasp. That point was driven home by a recent procedure in which a 48-year-old London amputee was fitted with a life-changing prosthetic hand developed by Ottobock, a company whose Canadian headquarters is located in our riding of Burlington. The advanced device is called the Michelangelo hand and uses advanced software that increases speed, responsiveness and predictability of performance. Through electrodes, it is able to read electrical signals in the wearer's muscle and then send a signal to a processor that moves the hand accordingly.

The Michelangelo hand is the only prosthetic hand with a thumb that electronically moves into position, allowing it to function more like a human hand. Multiple-grip functions also allow users to master everyday tasks, whether preparing a meal or holding a loved one's hand, and the thumb can open to create a natural palm shape.

First supplied to US veteran amputees starting in early 2012, they have since become available to civilians. Ottobock released the Michelangelo hand in Canada last year.

I'm happy that these kinds of success stories come out of our riding of Burlington. I am thrilled that the remarkable work being done at Ottobock is able to help give amputees greater independence.

### NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Last Friday, in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan, NOMA held their conference, the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association—by all accounts, an outstanding success. A record number of the members of NOMA were in attendance: Approaching 300 were there. I want to thank the cabinet ministers from our side of the House: nine of them, which was for certain a record in terms of the number of cabinet ministers ever attending a NOMA conference. So we had a fantastic turnout.

I also congratulated, and will again, new President David Canfield, the mayor of Kenora. David is not a new name to people. He's incoming and taking over from Ron Nelson, the outgoing president. Ron is an old friend of mine. He did a great job for a couple of years, and David Canfield will do an equally great job as well.

I congratulate Kristen Oliver—Kristen used to work for Lyn McLeod, my predecessor in this riding—the new ED of NOMA, and outgoing executive director Charla Robinson, who's taking over the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce.



During my remarks to the conference, I had an opportunity to invite the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Glen Murray, up, who reannounced something we had just put out previously, a short time earlier: a \$100-million down payment on roads and bridges for small, rural and northern municipalities. A further consultation will go on around that program to make it permanent.

As well, I was pleased to chair the first cabinet committee on northern Ontario during the NOMA conference outside of Toronto. As well, I want to convey that incoming President Canfield was very pleased to announce the support of our government for the Environmental Lakes area in northwestern Ontario, and he wanted me to convey his appreciation to the Premier on that announcement.

### AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Some of our economy's best innovations come from the farm. Mark Brock of Shepherd Creek Farms near Staffa is one of those innovators. Mark was awarded the 2012 Innovative Farmer of the Year Award.

For over 15 years, Mark has been finding better methods for soil management. He has adopted conservation till and no-till farming techniques.

I also want to recognize another innovation in agriculture. Powerline Films is a production company from Stratford. Powerline recently made an important contribution to our agri-food sector. Their 23rd video about farming and healthy food debuted at Queen's Park last week. Their production, Growing Good Food Ideas, is a collection of unique stories promoting food and farming in Ontario. I congratulate Simon Brothers, co-founder of Powerline Films, and Luke Mistruzzi, co-founder, director and animator, for their successful series.

In recent weeks, I have attended and hosted various meetings about agriculture in Perth–Wellington. I met with the Perth County Federation of Agriculture at their annual MPP and MP forum. I hosted a round table on agriculture in Clifford with MPPs Lisa Thompson and Bill Walker. Farmers told us they are tired of red tape and duplication. They would rather be in their fields than behind their desks filling out paperwork. They wonder about the future of our risk management programs. They are concerned about wind turbines and the rising cost of hydro.

Mr. Speaker, farmers just want to farm. I'm so proud to support them.

### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I beg leave to present a report on the pre-budget consultation 2013 from the

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Flynn presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Very shortly, Speaker, yes.

We travelled to Windsor. We went to Timmins. We went to Ottawa. We went to Thunder Bay, and spent a few days in Toronto. I want to express my sincere thanks to the members from all three parties, the members of the public that appeared before the committee, the staff from all three parties and, of course, the wonderful staff in the Legislative Assembly that helped in the preparation of this report. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I believe Mr. Flynn moves adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SAFETY AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES NORMES TECHNIQUES ET LA SÉCURITÉ

Mr. McDonell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 61, An Act to amend the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000 / *Projet de loi 61, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes techniques et la sécurité.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. The act establishes restrictions relating to inspection fees. It also provides that an inspector is not permitted to conduct an inspection under the act unless he has held an authorization under the act for a minimum of two years. This restriction applies beginning two years after the bill receives royal assent.

New subsection 16.1 of the act requires the minister to establish a self-inspection program for authorization holders. The minister has the power to make various regulations governing the program, including prescribing of procedures that authorization holders must follow while performing inspections and providing for inspectors to audit records and perform spot inspections.

New section 17.1 of the act requires the corporation to make available on its website any guideline or checklist that an inspector uses to conduct initial or periodic inspections. New section 17.2 of the act requires the corporation to give authorization holders the guideline or

checklist that will be used for the purpose of any inspection other than initial or periodic inspections.

The act provides that if any part of a code or standards ceases to exist, it will be deemed to continue to exist subject to certain conditions.

Under this act, a person may apply to the corporation to request that a director authorize the use of codes, standards, guidelines or procedures or changes to codes, standards, guidelines and procedures necessary to accommodate new developments or technological advances, or allow a variance from any regulation or minister's order made under the act.

The act also sets out what must be included in the application. The corporation must appoint a three-member panel. The panel's hearings must be open to the public. The panel must prepare a report and report back on whether or not a director should take the actions requested in the application, and the corporation must respond publicly within 15 days.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I assume that was the explanatory note.

## PETITIONS

### TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for the member from Prince Edward–Hastings to entertain us with petitions.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask that you send a couple of pages up, if that's okay. I have petitions here from thousands of Ontarians who enjoy and require the services provided by traditional Chinese medicine practitioners. I'd like to read those for you. There are 12,000 here in all.

1520

It's entitled, "Please Stop the Current Regulation on Traditional Chinese Practice.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario regulation 27/13 will effectively destroy the practice of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in Ontario, leaving countless patients with limited or no choice in managing their personal health;

"Whereas 27/13 requires that (a) TCM records and prescriptions must appear in English, French or Latin, resulting in miscommunication which could be harmful to patients; (b) more than 90% of common ailments can no longer be treated by TCM doctors; (c) TCM doctors cannot sell their essential herbal medications and supplements; (d) they must acquire an extensive knowledge of western medical theory, whereas western doctors 'qualify' in TCM after only dozens hours' training;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the government of Ontario to upload the long-held status, and value to the community, of verifiably licensed TCM doctors, and immediately stop

and review the current destructive regulation. At the same time, we urge an innovative and fair regulation designed to protect and benefit both patients and practitioners."

I agree with this and will send it to the table with three pages this afternoon.

### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I've got a petition signed by over 300 people, addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the University of Toronto, with Infrastructure Ontario, approved a plan to replace grass with synthetic turf on its back campus field for the 2015 Pan/Parapan AM Games; and

"Whereas the back campus plan will degrade the fabric of the campus and destroy one of the most substantial green spaces in downtown Toronto;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly direct the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games to withdraw his support for this project and seek a sustainable alternative venue to the back campus field. The back campus is one of the original features of the university and a cultural heritage landscape. Designed with restrictive specifications for international field hockey (FIH) pitches, the plan raises many social and environmental concerns. The government of Ontario and the University of Toronto ought to lead the world in designing sustainable open spaces for Canada's largest city."

I sign this petition.

### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly entitled, "Good Things Grow in Ontario.

"Whereas the agri-food industry is now, and has historically been, one of the primary economic drivers in Ontario; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario support local processors and producers in Ontario through purchasing and consuming locally grown and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and processed food products; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario farmers and Ontario food producers by leading by example; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario celebrates local Ontario producers and processors and promotes the good things grown, harvested and made in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 36, the Local Food Act."

I support this petition. I'll put my signature to it and I will give it to Gabriel.



## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I have a petition from residents in Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year; and

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

“Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs and drive people out of trades;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the” Liberal “job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

I gladly support this petition and will attach my name.

## PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the University of Toronto, with Infrastructure Ontario, approved a plan to replace grass with synthetic turf on its back campus field for the 2015 Pan/Parapan AM Games; and

“Whereas the back campus plan will degrade the fabric of the campus and destroy one of the most substantial green spaces in downtown Toronto;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly direct the minister responsible for the Pan/Parapan Am Games to withdraw his support for this project and seek a sustainable alternative venue to the back campus field. The back campus is one of the original features of the university and a cultural heritage landscape. Designed with restrictive specifications for international field hockey (FIH) pitches, the plan raises many social and environmental concerns. The government of Ontario and the University of Toronto ought to lead the world in designing sustainable open spaces for Canada’s largest city.”

I agree with this. I’ll put my name on it and give it to page Brendan.

## ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough’s oldest and most well-established community; and

“Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

“Whereas historically Agincourt’s electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

“Whereas communities, such as Scarborough–Agincourt, with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

“Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

“Whereas ‘community of interest’ is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

“Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

“Whereas the commission’s report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

“Whereas the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety, with its north Scarborough neighbours;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough–Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401.”

I fully support this petition and I give it to Chedi.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades introduced new membership fees on April 1, 2013, which hit hard-working tradespeople to the tune of about \$84 million a year;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Liberal government stop this job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

It’s signed by many people from my riding, and I’ll attach my signature to it and hand it to Megan.

## TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from—I’d better say “Nickel Belt,” because it’s getting too heavy for her.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I could only carry half of them. This is as much as it goes; the other half is coming. Here it goes:

“Whereas Ontario regulation 27/13 will effectively destroy the practice of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in Ontario, leaving countless patients with limited or no choice in managing their personal health;

“Whereas 27/13 requires that (a) TCM records and prescriptions must appear in English, French or Latin,

resulting in miscommunication which could be harmful to patients; (b) more than 90% of common ailments can no longer be treated by TCM doctors; (c) TCM doctors cannot sell their essential herbal medications and supplements; (d) they must acquire an extensive knowledge of western medical theory, whereas western doctors 'qualify' in TCM after only dozens hours' training;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the government of Ontario to uphold the long-held status, and value to the community, of verifiably licensed TCM doctors, and immediately stop and review the current destructive regulation. At the same time, we urge an innovative and fair regulation designed to protect and benefit both patients and practitioners."

Unfortunately, I didn't count them all, but thousands and thousands of people have signed this petition. I ask my good page Gabriel to do a muscle workout and bring it to you, Mr. Speaker.

#### FAMILY CAREGIVER LEAVE

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly entitled "Leaves to Help Families." It reads as follows:

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to look after their sick or injured family members without fearing that they will lose their jobs at such a vulnerable time;

"Whereas the people of Ontario deserve to be able to spend time looking for a child that has disappeared, or take time off to grieve the death of a child that was murdered without fearing that they will lose their jobs;

"Whereas the federal government has recently extended similar leaves and economic supports to federal employees;

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario families and wish to foster mental and physical well-being by allowing those closest to sick or injured family members the time to provide support free of work-related concerns;

1530

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 21, the Leaves to Help Families Act."

I support this petition. I will sign and give it to Benjamin to present to the table.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas a want-of-confidence motion has been tabled before the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario remains in power only while it has the confidence of the assembly; and

"Whereas the debate of a want-of-confidence motion requires the consent of all three parties' House leaders; and

"Whereas the recent scandals, including the Ornge air ambulance fiasco, the Mississauga and Oakville power plant cancellation and eHealth have shown Ontarians that the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government cannot be trusted with the administration of our province; and

"Whereas it is evident that the McGuinty-Wynne government has lost the confidence of Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately exercise its prime duty of holding the government accountable and bring a want-of-confidence motion to debate at the earliest" possible moment.

I will sign this and hand it off to page—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

#### UTILITY TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES

**Mr. John Vanthof:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the use of all-terrain vehicles ... is legal on schedule 2 highways in northern Ontario; and

"Whereas many residents of Ontario have switched to utility transportation vehicles (UTV); and

"Whereas the use of UTVs in schedule C of the Highway Traffic Act is allowed north of areas in far northern Ontario and unorganized territory...

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Therefore, be it resolved that the government of Ontario direct the Ministry of Transportation to enact legislation to allow the use of UTVs on class 2 highways throughout northern Ontario."

I fully agree and I hand the petition to Simon.

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the agri-food industry is now, and has historically been, one of the primary economic drivers in Ontario; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario support local processors and producers in Ontario through purchasing and consuming locally grown and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and processed food products; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario farmers and Ontario food producers by leading by example; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario celebrates local Ontario producers and processors and promotes the good things grown, harvested and made in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 36, the Local Food Act."

I fully support it and I give it to Fiona.



## HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** To the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the United Senior Citizens of Ontario has expressed its concerns over the high costs of parking at hospitals in Ontario" and "on behalf of its more than 300,000 members," request the following; and

"Whereas thousands of Ontario seniors find it difficult to live on their fixed income and cannot afford these extra hospital parking fees added to their daily living costs; and

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association Journal has said" recently "in an editorial that parking fees are a barrier to health care and add additional stress to patients who have enough to deal with;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Ontario's members of provincial Parliament and the" Kathleen Wynne "government take action to abolish parking fees for all seniors when visiting hospitals."

I'm pleased to sign and support this, and send it down to the table with Eve, one of the pages.

## MINING INDUSTRY

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's mineral wealth belongs to the people of Ontario;

"Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to enjoy their benefits;

"Whereas Ontario's Mining Act presently calls for resources mined in Ontario to be processed in Canada, yet allows cabinet to grant exceptions to the clause;

"Whereas these exceptions ensure residents of Ontario are told why our resources are being shipped elsewhere—information that can be used to better plan for infrastructure and job training needs to ensure a more competitive environment;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To amend the Mining Act to ensure that people living in Ontario maximize the benefit of their natural resources."

I support this petition and give this to Benjamin to deliver to the table.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

STRONGER PROTECTION  
FOR ONTARIO CONSUMERS ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 RENFORÇANT  
LA PROTECTION  
DU CONSOMMATEUR ONTARIEN

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 23, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 55, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 55, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les agences de recouvrement, la Loi de 2002 sur la protection du consommateur et la Loi de 2002 sur le courtage commercial et immobilier et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** It is a pleasure to rise again in this House and lead off on a bill relating to consumer protection. I will be splitting my time with the member from Prince Edward-Hastings, who will conclude the leadoff with valuable input regarding the real estate market.

This is an omnibus bill, just like its predecessor of the same number from the previous session of the 40th Parliament. An omnibus bill tackles several issues and enacts mostly unrelated issues to each other, usually under a common theme. Last year's Bill 55 was a budget implementation bill, an exercise in kicking the can down the road that we've seen this government do over and over again. While the province requires urgent fiscal action to reverse the disastrous course that we're on, the 2013 budget is still pending as we enter the month of May. This time, a new session brings us a new omnibus Bill 55, but dealing with consumer protection.

I would like to point out that whatever the Liberal government may say regarding its commitment to consumer protection, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, was tabled and enacted by the Progressive Conservative government. Moreover, it stood on the order paper of the third session of the 37th Parliament of Ontario under the name of the Honourable Tim Hudak.

The Progressive Conservatives have always been at the forefront of an open and trustworthy consumer market. I would like to lighten the mood for a moment and refer my honourable colleagues to the leadoff of what was then Bill 180. Our current leader, Tim Hudak, listed how the Consumer Protection Act would address the shift of consumption to the services sector and how it would ensure a solid framework for consumer protection for the—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Just a moment.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I'm not sure there's a quorum in the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Is there a quorum?

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** A quorum is not present, Speaker.

*The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** A quorum is now present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. You may continue.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you. I would like to lighten the mood for a moment and refer our honourable

colleagues to the leadoff that was provided on the then Bill 180.

Our current leader, Tim Hudak, listed how the Consumer Protection Act would address the shift of consumption to the services sector and how it would ensure a solid framework for consumer protection in the 21st century. We knew then, as we do now, that ensuring a tough environment for dishonest businesses was essential for consumer confidence, and we delivered on that commitment.

Following the leadoff, the House heard questions and comments and further leadoffs. The issues raised in that discussion were on gas prices, hydro rates, tanning beds and auto insurance. Fast-forward 11 years, and the issues and the names have hardly changed.

This assembly sometimes resembles the movie *Groundhog Day*, something that the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound can relate to. He's not here today but has talked about that.

Speaker, there are 13 million Ontarians, and it stands up to scrutiny that none of them live under a rock or are completely independent of the society outside their family unit. This means they need to engage with others through a common system of exchange that has rules, guarantees and, sadly, the occasional rotten apple.

They become consumers, and it is the duty of every government to ensure that the presence of three factors that grease the engine of market economics: clear, universal, understandable and accessible rules. Consumers cannot be confused by a patchwork of regulations that force them to consult the e-Laws website on a regular basis.

1540

At the same time, businesses must know what type of environment they operate in and enjoy a good degree of certainty of what tomorrow might bring from this government. Too often, we see this Liberal government choose the power of regulation without regard for the consequences and, sadly, sometimes for their own financial benefit and at the expense of hard-working Ontarians.

I spoke about excessive regulation in the farming sector in my speech on the Local Food Act earlier this month, yet farming isn't the only sector government regulates without considering the consequences. Earlier this year, the government implemented an utterly useless change in its vehicle emissions testing system, against the recommendation of the Auditor General, that left thousands of Ontario consumers at risk of losing their perfectly clean-running vehicles. It took them more than two months to amend the policy, and it still caused unnecessary expense for the consumer.

Unlike acts of Parliament, regulations hit us the same moment that they hit the pages of the *Ontario Gazette*, without scrutiny or feedback from the opposition, who, it seems, does a much better job of consulting Ontarians in coming up with real solutions, as we've done in our white papers.

The second factor, Speaker, is recourse when the rules are broken. Our court system is not as slow as elsewhere in the world. However, a claim by a consumer against a less-than-honest business can take months, if not years, to process. This will inevitably cause skyrocketing legal costs; stress, with all of its health consequences; and, last but not least, a decrease in consumer confidence.

When consumers are not secure in the knowledge that their rights are protected, consumption diminishes and the economy suffers. This means the minister must have excellent enforcement and judgment tools and work in conjunction with our federal counterparts such as the Competition Bureau.

The third lubricant of our machinery that generates prosperity and tax income from government is information. This province has one of the highest-skilled and best-trained workforces in the world, an achievement it should always be proud of, and we must also strive to have the best-informed consumer market in the developed world. This can only be achieved through proactive and long-term plans of action and consumer education that goes beyond the occasional press release and good story in the Toronto media. We can have a consumer protection framework of the highest degree of perfection, yet it would be utterly useless without a consumer who is well versed in its workings.

Many things have changed since 2002. Then, the Liberals were blaming the Progressive Conservatives for high hydro rates, and the dollar was trading in the range of 60 cents US. Business was booming. Ontario was a place to work and set up business. After 10 years of Liberal government, we have yet to see an election promise that they've kept. Electricity rates are close to tripling. The provincial debt is skyrocketing—close to doubling—under this government.

But this government has been extremely diligent when it comes to finding new areas to cover their addiction of spending. They have more than tripled the unfunded liability of the WSIB, and pension plan shortfalls are reaching critical levels.

Let us not forget the huge tax increases. The health tax and the HST are just two of the over 100 tax and fee increases levelled at the Ontario consumer to try to fill their unquenchable thirst to spend.

Does anyone in this House remember what I believe was the first promise that this government made and broke? It signed a contract with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation that it would not raise taxes. It not only broke the agreement with the Ontario health tax, the largest tax increase in Ontario's short 138-year history, back in 2003, but it had the gall to defend it in court.

Certain industries have evolved; others have sprung up, and the Consumer Protection Act needs to evolve to reflect these changes. We have before us a bill to amend three acts and address consumer concerns in three industries: debt settlement, water heaters and real estate. I'll begin by addressing debt settlement, because it is the most straightforward portion of Bill 55.

Pick up any free daily newspaper and look toward the end. One classified page is taken up by psychics, and the



next classified page is taken up by debt settlers offering their services. The sales pitch is always the same: Your bills are too onerous, your payments are long overdue, you are under pressure, and there is a way out. Often, this way out is touted as cheap, fast and easy.

I wish to point out that even on October 28, 2002, when what was then Bill 180 came into second reading, our leader, the Minister of Business and Consumer Services, Tim Hudak, said: "The first exercise is always to use common sense. If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is, and we ask them to exercise caution." Often, for all you know, one might be calling the settler and then asking the psychic if it's going to work, because the industry is marred with quite a few rotten apples.

A vulnerable Ontarian who needs to tackle his or her debts will sometimes resort to a debt settler. They can be honest or less so, and there's nary a way of knowing. Ideally, the consumer would do some research and read reviews. Then the consumer would compare the services of some settlers and pick the most appropriate for his or her needs.

This isn't how it happens, unfortunately. The landlord is calling; collectors are calling; your employers are upset because there are persistent collectors calling your office; and the kids are crying. Your spouse is grumpy, and you feel that "bankruptcy" is a dirty word. The promises of getting out of debt fast, painlessly and cheaply are all too alluring to pass by.

While no settlement is ever painless, if you have ever had one, you can kiss your credit rating goodbye. We need to see some serious steps in the legislation to ensure that once a consumer—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** —has resorted to a settler, he or she can kiss the collectors goodbye with equal measure.

If the bill strengthens the terms of this agreement to settle a debt and ban upfront fees, it will generate an incentive for the settler to generally pursue all available avenues for earning his or her commission.

Does this mean, however, that the settler now has the agency power for the consumer? When a collector calls the consumer, it is a contract with a settlement service guarantee that the consumer will be left alone. If this bill doesn't have that provision, it's missing an important piece of the puzzle.

Across this House, members share a common commitment to ensuring consumers are told the truth about businesses, both in advertising and privately. Not telling fibs has been part of our common codes of conduct and laws since before the times of Moses, and false advertising laws are in place throughout Canada.

If all of a sudden we need to prohibit the same practices in debt settlement services, I think we'll have to look at the false advertising framework across all industries, identifying the efficiencies that make this practice prohibitively necessary.

I also believe that the consumer needs to know, when he signs a contract, that the organization has his best interests at heart and that no conflict of interest exists with the organization that is providing the service.

I understand that this ministry has heard of issues around agreements between the lenders and the debt settlers that provided benefits back to the organizations. Minister, I want to refer you to an old saying: One cannot have two masters. Either they're working for the lenders or they're working for the debtor; not both.

The legislation must make any and all remuneration to the settling organization known to the debtor—no exceptions. For instance, some credit counselling service firms feature credit representatives on their board of directors. It doesn't take an expert in corporate law to understand that a firm directed by those to whom the consumer owes money will focus on recovering most of the debt rather than examining the consumer's financial situation and determining the most appropriate repayment schedule and amount.

According to some sources, consumers who resort to credit counsellors will end up repaying approximately 90% of their debt, while those who avail themselves of the services of a settler are more likely to obtain settlements below 50%.

**1550**

There isn't any magic involved. There is a question of interest. The consumer deserves to know, before entering into a contract involving his or her debt, the interests that are served by the company and where the company's income originates from. Credit counselling and debt settlement are two different approaches, and most settlement firms act as advocates for the consumer alone. They bring their experience and contacts to the service of the consumer's interests, since only a record of successful settlements will maintain them in business. The confidence of Ontarians in the ministry and its legislative remit must be fostered by enshrining principles such as full disclosure of the company funding and directorships to the consumer.

However, the minister chooses to defer such policy points to regulations. This can be problematic. With an act of Parliament, the opposition can identify the issues of concern and provide the government with advice on improving the legislation. Last year, when we discussed Bill 82, we highlighted our concerns with proposed wireless regulations and we were happy to see the government listen, at least in part. Regulations, on the other hand, are made behind closed doors and as such are much more vulnerable to influence than an act is.

We don't need to dig deep to find examples of bad regulations. Tire stewardship fees, Drive Clean tests, the Toronto G20 security regulations: The government has made all efforts to regulate first and ask questions next. This is why we would have liked to see certain mandatory disclosures enshrined in the Consumer Protection Act rather than an accessory act or, worst of all, a future, yet-to-be-determined regulation.

The minister raises an important issue that likely affects more industries than just the debt itself. An honest, diligent and experienced debt settler can be a godsend to a consumer in trouble. He brings a wealth of experience, contacts and alternatives to bankruptcy. I

hope that throughout this debate all sides of the House will concur that we must ensure the consumer has access to the goods and services that he wants or needs.

If I can read part of the Auditor General's report, where he talks about this in particular:

"A key requirement for the registration and licensing processes is to ensure that applicants meet standards for integrity, honesty, and financial viability, and that they comply with the consumer protection and business obligation requirements of the legislation for their industry. We found that the files we reviewed had little or no documentation to demonstrate that the business or individual met these requirements, including:

"—for collection agencies, debt collectors, and assistant bailiffs, whether the applicant's credit history had been checked;

"—for collection agencies and bailiffs, the information on whether the required trust account was established;

"—for collection agencies, whether financial statements were obtained;

"—whether criminal background checks on the principals involved were ever conducted; and

"—whether the applicant had supplied proof of citizenship, landed immigrant documents, or other documents showing eligibility to work in Ontario.

"We also noted that the ministry continued to renew collection agencies' licences even when they had been the subject of numerous past complaints. The Collection Agencies Act gives the ministry the powers to refuse to issue a new registration or to revoke or suspend an existing one if the ministry believes that the business 'cannot reasonably be expected to be financially responsible in the conduct of business' or its past conduct indicates that it 'will not carry on business in accordance with law and with integrity and honesty.' For example, we found about 20 collection agencies that had each averaged from 20 to more than 460 inquiries and complaints annually in 2002-03 through 2008-09. All of their licences were renewed and active over the last two years, even though there was no documentation of any follow-up during the licensing renewal process to assess the legitimacy of the complaints.

"The ministry informed us that it has revoked licences for serious and repeat violations, making these decisions on a case-by-case basis.... We agree with the ministry that the number of complaints should not be the only basis for revoking or withholding a collection agency's licence, because complaints might not be justified or be all that serious in nature.

"However, especially when the volume of complaints is significant, some follow-up should be required."

So we see there are issues here that he brought up that need to be addressed.

On water heaters, there was news in 2012 due to Direct Energy's negative-option billing action. It's upsetting that what should be a simple and straightforward industry in Ontario is instead marred by so many issues. We have to maintain the focus on what is wrong: the deliberate deception, hiding of costs, the exploitation of

customers' vulnerabilities by certain rotten apples in the door-to-door sales sector.

The minister is doubling the cool-off period for water heater rentals, which is one aspect of our ministry's remit. Why not other contracts, such as gym memberships or any other future performance contract? If the purpose is to protect the consumer from incurring onerous cancellation fees, the problem is the fees rather than the cool-off period. In this case, the bill is a treatment but certainly not a cure.

Once a new heater is installed, following 20 days, if the consumer hasn't sorted out the matters with the original supplier, they will face some severe penalties. Cancellation charges can run up into the hundreds of dollars. Moreover, the suppliers are free to charge outrageous amounts for damages such as small scratches on a 10-year-old tank.

Aggressive sales tactics are certainly a concern, but let's remember that consumers are taken advantage of in more than one way. The fact of the matter is that you cannot legislate away deception and vulnerability. We have many laws against undesirable actions; that does not mean people have stopped doing them. We need to strengthen the ministry's enforcement tools and ensure consumers have recourse beyond the court system, since often the ones who get into trouble are also the ones who can least afford a lawyer.

Doubling the cooling-off period and requiring plain language rests on one assumption: The consumer will both sign at the door and then do research and calculation. Remember, people tend to complain when things go wrong, which usually means they've received service and the cool-off period is long past. So whether the cool-off period is a period of 10, 20 or 100 days, until the problem materializes in a massive bill or shoddy customer service, the minister is likely not to hear about it.

Minister, you haven't mentioned anything regarding either full cost disclosure by the salesman or the cancellation fees and penalties. If, as I said, many consumers won't complain until the problem has materialized in their credit card system or bank account, this bill offers no improvement except column inches in print media. Consumers need clear rules, smooth transitions, open and fair competition, and minimum inconvenience. Some of these principles transpire in some form from the minister's statements and press releases.

One issue that, as I say, we highlighted were the cancellation fees under this bill, and the procedures—issues such as needing delivery to warehouses. The two largest players in the field are both under investigation by the federal competition board for steps that they've taken to make it very difficult to cancel long-term contracts. We've seen equipment that's been installed for longer than its renewable life. I guess you wouldn't reinstall it; the equipment is generally thrown away. But when the customer calls to cancel the service, he's either put on hold for long periods of time or he's tried to be talked out of it; scare tactics sometimes seem to be used. These companies have been charged in the past. They're under



continued investigation. I would have expected some words in this bill to address that issue. That seems to be a bigger issue, of the complaints that we've been able to ascertain.

So let's not forget: The two largest players in the industry are under federal investigation by the Competition Bureau. This bill has open support for at least one of those large players. I may be a lone skeptic, but when a company under federal investigation for supposedly anti-consumer actions suddenly talks about consumer protection, one has to wonder about the details, the consequences of the legislation.

So we'll be working through this legislation. We'll be looking for amendments on these two items to give the bill some teeth and to really get to the root of protecting consumers' needs in this province.

1600

As we talked about before, sometimes the people who need the help the most can't resort to some of the measures talked about, through the courts. They haven't got the financial abilities or the time to do such a thing. Sometimes the issue comes up and people just want a seamless contract that works, where they can go out and it's trouble-free. This bill goes some of the distance, but it has certainly some further room to travel.

I will pass the reminder of the time over to the member from Prince Edward-Hastings to discuss the real estate portion of it. Thank you.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate here this afternoon in the Legislature. It's interesting that we're talking about Bill 55, the Consumer Protection Act. Earlier today we had members of Advocis here. The members of Advocis will be holding a reception a little bit later on. My good friend Shannon Neely is here from the Quinte region—a financial adviser from the Belleville area. It's interesting that they're here on this day, because financial services and the industry have a term that they like to use—we heard the term earlier today in our meeting—and that is “raising the bar.”

It refers to setting a higher standard for professional conduct among its members, and it's a sentiment that pervades a lot of high-cost sectors of the economy. Financial advisers use it, so do mortgage brokers and, yes, even our realtors use it as well in Ontario. That's because they understand that there's a certain amount of trust that goes into transactions of that magnitude. Let's be clear: Buying a house and making a real estate transaction is one of the largest transactions financially that you're ever going to make in your life for most people out there, and it takes a great deal of trust in your real estate agent. I guess you could say that's what the second half of this bill is all about, and that's the real estate sector.

Members in good standing in any profession often feel like the actions of a few bad apples or bad members drag down the entire profession. The goal should be to get those bad actors out of the profession, get those bad apples out of the business, and the best way to do that is to set industry-wide standards for conduct. We've seen that in other elements of business and society as well.

As I mentioned, today we're lucky enough to have the representatives from Advocis who are here, and they are the province's financial advisers. They're here at the Legislature to talk to us about their issues. The standards that we're applying to the real estate sector are in the best tradition of raising the bar. We want a real estate sector that uses the best and most transparent and most accountable sales practices that we can have here in Ontario.

Anyone who has ever worked in a commission sales environment—and I'm fortunate enough to say that I never have worked in that kind of an environment, but I know a lot of people who do work in sales, whether it be broadcasting sales, of course, in my previous profession, or door-to-door sales or real estate. Obviously, as the small business critic and the critic for red tape for the Ontario PC Party and the official opposition here at Queen's Park, I talk to a lot of people who are in that kind of business on a day-to-day basis, and they know that the pressure they're dealing with is intense. I can definitely feel that, especially in a time like now where, let's be honest, the economy isn't at its best in Ontario. As a matter of fact, it's far from being at its best, and it's sagging behind the rest of Canada and in fact much of North America.

In that kind of a business, where you're in sales and commission sales, your paycheque at the end of every week or every two weeks or at the end of every month depends on how effective you are at selling whatever product it is to your customers. And when whether you eat depends on how well you sell, you'll have members of the profession who, unfortunately, sink to tactics or new lows that the profession would generally frown upon. But it's trying times. This is where the issue of the phantom offers comes in when talking about real estate transactions, and phantom offers have been a problem in some sectors of real estate in the province recently. What needs to be made clear is that no one out there approves of phantom offers; that's quite clear.

I have a few dozen small brokerages in my riding of Prince Edward-Hastings, which includes the Belleville region and Prince Edward county out into Lake Ontario, and then north into North Hastings as well. There are a lot of small brokerages there. There are some large brokerages as well in my riding, and realtors and brokerage owners are the same as any other small business owners in a community right across the province.

The success of the business is very much tied to the conduct of the employees in the community. Your brokers are ambassadors for your brokerage, and their conduct reflects on the business that they work for. So it's very important that if you own a brokerage, those who are out there representing you, trying to complete sales and make money for both themselves and your brokerage, are behaving properly and are raising the bar. As much as the principal at a brokerage may want to see their agents sell, they of course don't want to harm their business in the process, and that's where the ethics come into play.

Realtors themselves are small business people, and any small business person wants repeat customers, as

does anybody who's in a commissioned sales job. They want to have people that trust them, that know that they've done good for them in the past and that they'll be a repeat customer in the future. That's in financial advising, that deals with car sales and that deals with real estate, which we're talking about right now. That's tied to the quality of the service you deliver. If you're a good and upstanding real estate agent or real estate brokerage, then you're going to get that repeat customer.

It's not in the long-term interest, of course, of any of those people to lower the bar or employ questionable sales tactics. It's obviously not in the interest of the clients who are out there, and that's who we are looking out for in this bill. Inflating prices is how we create bubbles, and some may argue that we're in the midst of a bubble here in the GTA when it comes to real estate.

Phantom offers distort the market as well. If one agent pushes the price up on a bungalow in Scarborough or a neighbourhood in the GTA, they push up the price on all similar bungalows in that neighbourhood—no matter where it is in the province; not just here in the GTA, but anywhere in Ontario, for that matter. That doesn't help anyone. In fact, it's a general harm to the entire economy. Inflated prices lead to bigger mortgages, more household debt and also higher default rates. None of that is desirable.

You can look at the Ontario books right now and you can see that we're not in a very desirable place when you look at Confederation here in Canada. As a matter of fact, digging deeper and deeper and deeper into debt with every single hour that passes—\$1.9 million in Ontario is added to the province's already staggering and record debt. With every day that passes, we're adding millions of dollars onto our debt—\$23 million onto our debt, which is now at about \$265 billion. The debt in Ontario is at \$265 billion. That's doubled under the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals over the last 10 years. That's debt that's very difficult to get out of.

That's also debt that requires interest to be paid on it. You think about where we are right now—anybody who's out there buying a home knows that this is a great time to buy a home because interest rates are at an all-time low in Ontario. They've been there for some time, but eventually those rates are going to go up. Right now, this year in Ontario, because of the debt in Ontario at \$265 billion, we'll pay \$11 billion to service that debt in interest; \$11 billion is just gone right off the top. That's a staggering number when you think about it.

You talk about transit, and that's a big issue in the province right now, especially here in the GTHA, the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. You talk about \$11 billion and how far that \$11 billion that we pay in interest—that doesn't go to pay for anything except to service that debt—that money is just disappearing, but it could be used to put subway lines in to get people out of the gridlock that is slowing down the economy in Ontario. As a matter of fact, the Toronto board of trade says \$6 billion a year in lost commerce is occurring out there on our 400 series of highways.

That's money that could go to health care, and there are many people in this Legislature, in their own ridings, who are having difficulty or hearing the horror stories about people who can't get home care in their ridings or their hospitals are losing services. I have Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital in my riding, and Trenton Memorial Hospital in Quinte West, where services are being moved out of the hospital.

1610

And you think about where that \$11 billion could go that isn't going anywhere but to service this debt. Just imagine, Madam Speaker, if the interest rates start to rise. When they start to rise, we're in a world of trouble if we continue to have multi-billion-dollar deficits like we've seen in Ontario over the last five or six years under the McGuinty and Wynne Liberals. They were patting themselves on the back the other day, if you can imagine that, at the Economic Club for having a nearly \$10-billion deficit for the upcoming year. They're patting themselves on the back for that. It's incredible, really. Anyway, I digress.

The notion of commission sales, as I get back to real estate agents: It was put to me this way by a real estate brokerage—the owner of a brokerage here in the GTA: “In commission sales”—this is a quote—“you absolutely eat what you kill, but one lion doesn't have the right to feed a poisoned antelope to the rest of the pride.”

Going back to the bill here that was put forward by the Minister of Consumer Services, Bill 55: If we're going to get serious about business practices like this, then we need to raise the bar in this sector. We have to start to get serious about it and start to put some teeth into legislation. We've seen it time and time again in this Legislature. A bill comes forward and—what's the name of this one again? The Consumer Protection Act. It sounds great, doesn't it? We've heard the name of the local food bill. It has nothing in it that's affecting farmers. There's nothing in there. It's just a nice-sounding title to a bill. It's almost as if they say, “Okay, we need to put something out there to debate today and we're going to call it the Local Food Act. It won't have anything in it. It won't have any proposed legislation in it. We'll just throw it out there and it'll take up some time in the Legislature.”

The members of the opposition and the third party can talk about these bills and how important the titles of these bills are in their respective ridings, but at the end of the day, the government hasn't done any consultation to decide what actually should be in that bill before it hits the floor of the Legislature. It's almost as if they're waiting for us to put the details in the bill here on the floor of the Legislature, but then, even after we do that, they never call it to committee so we can put the amendments in it. That's kind of what this bill is all about, Madam Speaker.

I can tell you that many members on this side of the House in the official opposition have put forward private members' bills. The reason we put forward private members' bills, obviously, is because we're in the official opposition and we have many ideas as to how we can



make this province a better place to live, work and play. We come up with good ideas to put on the floor of the Legislature so that we can debate them and actually make a change in our own ridings and hopefully in the province. But none of them ever get anywhere. None of them ever get anywhere. It's as if this government just wants to live for tomorrow. That's their main objective: to live to see tomorrow and retain their seats and power and continue to have their ministries and continue to have their ministers' paycheques and their drivers and their limos. The objective should be to help our province prosper.

I can tell you that one of the private bills I put forward in this House, as the PC Party critic for red tape, was Bill 28. It was the electronic signatures bill. It would have allowed real estate agents to use electronic signatures, which would have sped up the process. It would have reduced red tape for real estate agents in Ontario. I'm happy to say that that bill, Madam Speaker, was warmly received by all three parties in the Legislature. I think they all realized that it made a lot of sense because, first of all, electronic signatures are available to real estate agents in the rest of Canada and 30 states and most of the UK and Europe. But for some reason, it still hasn't moved on at the committee stage.

We have programs already available that track offers on particular properties in other jurisdictions in Ontario—back to the bill here—and we can harness the power of software like that to track real offers that come in on properties or even if other offers have come in on properties, as part of a sincere crackdown on these phantom offers that are alluded to in this bill. If we can use the technology we have available to make real estate transactions more transparent and agents more accountable, then we'll start to put an end to these phantom offers.

It seems like a month never goes by without the Bank of Canada warning us about high levels of household debt across the country. We know that not all of this debt is mortgages—as a matter of fact, if you're going to have debt, a mortgage is probably the best place to incur that debt—but it is credit lines, it's credit cards, vehicle payments, and any number of other debts incurred by a household to meet expenses. As a nation that's been historically hesitant to run up big charges on the credit card, we've certainly been spending here in Ontario. If there are responsible ways of fighting growing levels of household debt without intervening directly in the market, then we have to explore that. We have to do more than pay lip service to it. And that's all that this bill really does, Madam Speaker. For those of you just tuning in, as I used to say in my broadcasting career, Bill 55 is the Consumer Protection Act.

In order to track phantom offers better and put appropriate consumer safeguards in place, we need to pass Bill 28, which is the bill that I put forward, in order to move real estate sales in the electronic age. We can then make it easier to crack down on phantom offers across the province.

There's also a second part to this bill, and it deals with the real estate sector as well. That's the ability to charge both a fee and a commission on a real estate transition. So you can charge both a fee and a commission on one transaction.

Earlier in my remarks, I talked about the high-pressure sales environment that many of our real estate agents find themselves in on a day-to-day basis. Part of fighting high-pressure and underhanded selling tactics can be fighting the motivation to use those tactics.

I know back in my area, in the Quinte region, the Quinte and District Real Estate Board puts out its stats every month, as all real estate boards do right across the province. I can tell you that March wasn't the best month that we've seen for real estate transactions in the Quinte region. There are probably a number of variables for that, including the weather that we experienced in March, which wasn't very good compared to March a year ago. April wasn't really that great, either. Real estate agents will tell you that part of a good market involves good weather: the feeling that spring is in the air and the daffodils are starting to bloom and the tulips are starting to sprout, and there's that feeling of optimism in the air, and maybe people are ready to start to sell their homes. I can tell you that there is that pressure there to have a good spring in the real estate market.

So what we can do is start to add some stability to how real estate agents are able to make money from their transactions. If we remove some of the pressure on the agent, then we'll remove some of the motivation to use these high-pressure sales tactics. The biggest question about this part of the bill is why the Ontario government has waited so long to move to custom pricing of real estate transactions in the first place. Ontario is the last province in Canada, again, to make this change. Ontario still hasn't made the change on the electronic signatures act, and we haven't moved in this area, either. We're the last to do it.

Why are we always at the back of the bus here in Ontario? We used to be the leader, not so long ago, in Confederation. So really, it's the function of certain government ministries—it's almost as if they're intentionally designed to be reactive instead of proactive. Why are we not out there in a proactive fashion trying to help each and every sector that we possibly can be as productive as it possibly can?

What we end up doing in the province—and keep in mind you're talking to a former news broadcaster here—is reacting to the big news stories of the day. At least this government is doing that: a knee-jerk type of response to events that are occurring out there. If there's W5 doing a big story on some kind of phantom offer scandal in the province, then we come out with this kind of legislation to deal with that.

What ends up happening is that you get more red tape and more regulation.

1620

Instead of going out there in a proactive effort to try to make it easier for real estate agents or any salesperson

across the province to make money—because if they make the money and they increase their wealth, the businesspeople that I know and that I've met over the last 18 months want to invest in their business. They want to hire more employees. They want to put more people to work. That's what it's all about. Obviously, one of the biggest beneficiaries of a small business person growing their business is the province, because then we are going to take our share—and you know we are going to take our share here in the province. But if our small business sector is shrinking in size and productivity, then we're getting less here in Ontario. The thing that boggles my mind most since arriving here at Queen's Park, as a relatively new MPP, is that we're not doing more of that. We're not taking these proactive steps to make business thrive in Ontario so that we can get back to being the leader in Confederation that we once were.

If you've got a CBC story that deals with bill shock—and I think we'll see some legislation in the next couple of days come back before the House dealing with cellular phones—then you've got a ministry that will come out with legislation to deal with that news story. If you've got a Toronto Star story that talks about the underhanded tactics of door-to-door salesmen, then you've got a ministry that comes out with legislation to deal with that news story. Eventually, you do need to take a proactive approach to governing. You need to stop legislating just to fight problems that come up in the media.

The last meaningful piece of legislation that the consumer services ministry actually passed—and I'm talking about passed, not just put forward or proclaimed—was passed 10 years ago, as my friend from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry mentioned earlier, when the current member from Niagara West-Glanbrook, Tim Hudak, was the minister. He passed this legislation 10 years ago.

If I could paraphrase the BBC for a moment—not the CBC, but the BBC—consumer services is the ultimate “yes ministry.” A story comes out, a piece of legislation comes out to respond to the story in the press, the government gets to appear as though it's actually doing something, and then the story will go away. It really is the ministry of smoke and mirrors, with all due respect to the minister.

This bill is an omnibus bad-news bill, really. It responds to bad-news stories and takes the approach of prying open vague areas of provincial jurisdiction to insert legislation to try to quell a scandal or bad-news story that's in the media. There are important measures in this bill, Madam Speaker, but they were important measures before the stories ever hit the airwaves or hit the press, and they'll be important measures once these scandals have passed.

We, as a party, will be supporting Bill 55 at second reading. But we do need to make these kinds of bills more than just scandal-management bills or bad-news-story-management bills. As I've said, we all want to crack down on things like phantom offers or predatory debt-settlement companies that are out there in our midst;

there are not a lot of them, but there are some out there. It is happening. It is a problem, especially in some sectors or some neighbourhoods in Ontario—not everywhere. It does no good for us to allow these types of predators to exist in our neighbourhoods. However, we need to have more than just a goal in mind.

That's one of the things that has been criticized about this government continually over the past 18 months that I've been here and prior to me arriving here: the fact that they're a government that sets some goals and aspires to do certain things, but they never really put in any concrete targets that they want to reach. They just want to aspire. They may do something; “may” is a word that we hear often from this government. That's the problem with proposing legislation to deal with a bad-news story as well. Instead of coming up with a comprehensive framework to actually address a bad business practice, we have legislation that just deals with or aspires to possibly, maybe, someday reach a goal. We need to put actual muscle into the legislation. It has to actually do something instead of just aspiring to do something, and we have the power to do that here, as legislators in the province of Ontario. Instead, for whatever reason, the government just aspires to do things. It doesn't actually do anything. We need an actual system for dealing with phantom offers. Instead of just saying that we're going to do something about it, we actually have to do something about it.

We need legislation that ensures that the chosen settler is the recipient of collection calls, which this bill doesn't do as well. Why doesn't this legislation deal with anti-competitive tank return when it comes to the issues that my friend from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry was referring to? Why doesn't it deal with anti-competitive tank returns and cancellation costs? It often makes the consumer responsible for high damage costs.

When you draft legislation to play for a headline or to sit on a failure, you're, by nature, drafting incomplete legislation. Consumer protection is important, but too often these bills are about the appearance of action rather than actual meaningful action. But that's a theme again that we've heard from this government in files ranging far beyond consumer protection.

As a matter of fact, right now as we speak, Madam Speaker, the Premier is testifying before a committee of this Legislature in the ultimate example of the appearance of action. She's appearing before the justice committee right now. She could have done something meaningful: She could have simply provided the House with all of the information that we had asked for. This has been going on for a long time now. Tomorrow is May. I believe it was May of last year when we actually started asking for these documents for the cancelled power plants in Oakville and Mississauga. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe it was May that the estimates committee actually started this hunt, seeking the information that the public should get on the cancelled gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga, one of the biggest scandals we've ever seen in the province of Ontario. She's making



it seem as if she's being transparent, but we all know that the game of hide and seek has been continuing. Documents haven't been turned over, and now we've had to require the Premier to come before a committee—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I would remind the member to stay with the bill that's being debated. Thank you.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I did stray a little bit. I tend to do that when you have a bill before you that—again I have to remind myself of what this bill is. It's Bill 55, which is the Consumer Protection Act. We're speaking for an hour on this bill this afternoon, so you can see why perhaps you might stray, especially when you look at the size of the bill. I don't have the bill in front of me, but there's not a whole lot in there, as was outlined again by my colleague from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry.

What we've seen from this government is really a lack of action. They have the opportunity to bring forward legislation that will deal with not just door-to-door salesmen—we get complaints all the time—and I'm sure my friend Mr. McDonnell does as well as the consumer services critic for the PC Party—from people who are trying to run their business. The TSSA—you know, nothing has come from this consumer services ministry dealing with the TSSA. It could include—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Todd Smith:** We did actually, but the TSSA is out of control. They're charging increased fees at the TSSA, and they're running a surplus. Why? Why would we be doing that to our small business people? I can tell you, the Rosebush family, who operate a propane company back in the Quinte area, is wondering why the consumer services ministry isn't doing something about these fees. They have the ability, right? The TSSA falls under the mandate of the consumer services ministry. Why can't they step in and do something about this?

Last year, chip truck owners—and they're a small business, but these are the people that I try to represent as best I can here at Queen's Park. These are chip truck operators that are being put out of business because the ministry or the TSSA are out there putting these small business owners out of business by charging them exorbitant amounts to comply with legislation that really overlaps other legislation that isn't required. Red tape is the biggest problem out there for small business owners right now.

1630

We've talked about it in the farming industry when we discussed the Local Food Act, which is supposedly about increasing the demand and mandate to provide local food to our communities. It really doesn't contain much either. The Local Food Act isn't doing anything, really, in the bill to increase productivity for our agricultural sector; Bill 55 is doing very, very little to increase sales or help our small business people, who are out there trying to make a living, increase their business and increase their productivity.

When I talk to small business owners who are out there, and they say, "What can the government do for

me?"—well, the government can actually help me do business by acting in a proactive manner, not trying to constantly bury us in more and more red tape, whether it's the College of Trades—we've heard a lot about the College of Trades in this Legislature and what it's doing to our small business people out there. Some 88% of small business owners who are in the contracting line of work, whether it be carpenters or roofers, electricians, plumbers, drywallers, stonemasons or hairdressers, are all being hit by increased taxes. Let's be honest: That's what it is—a tax.

Instead of helping our small business people expand their businesses and create jobs and grow the economy, this government is doing whatever it can to heap more and more regulation on top of those small business owners, and I hear from those people all the time. That's why a few weeks ago at the Quinte sports centre, when I had the opportunity to sign the stop-the-trades-tax flyer that they had and their petition that they had, I did that, because it's smothering business. It's smothering growth. It's smothering job creation in the province of Ontario.

Bill 119, which was passed a year or two ago and came into effect last January, is costing our construction people an average of about \$11,000 or \$12,000 a year. Why do we keep penalizing the job creators? Home builders and those in construction have been the engine of our economy in a time when our economy has been struggling. Why are we penalizing those people by bringing in a WSIB tax like Bill 119 that's again costing the average business \$11,000, and many more than that? Why are we bringing in the College of Trades? Why are we doing that? They don't even want that—88% of those who are out there.

We need to be acting in a proactive manner to help our business people grow the economy, not just simply saying that we're going to talk to them, which seems to be the mandate and the mission statement of the current government, to have conversations and talk about it—talk about transparency, but do we ever actually see the transparency? Again, we go back to this fake transparency that we've been seeing from the Premier's office when it comes to the gas plant scandal. Why couldn't they just bring the numbers to us, Madam Speaker? They knew what the numbers were. Why didn't we bring the numbers forward—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The minister—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Although I've really enjoyed the speech from the member from Prince Edward-Hastings, I would just remind everybody—I believe it's section 23(b)—about directing his or her speech to other matters besides the bill that's currently before us.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. I would remind the member to keep in the spirit of the standing order.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'm happy to see that the member from Peterborough is paying attention. That's very nice. Thank you, Minister of Rural Affairs.

I would just like to conclude my remarks on Bill 55 and say, as I say, that when we talk about most of the government bills that are before us, there have been a few maybe that have had some kind of meat on the bone, some kind of an intended outcome, but it seems to me that Bill 55 and the Local Food Act and others that we've been debating recently don't really have any kind of mission except to occupy time here in the Legislature. When we're dealing with the kind of economic instability in the province that we're dealing with right now, little bills like this aren't going to do anything to get us back on track in Ontario.

We need some real, dynamic change. We need some bold, new ideas. We need some fundamental change in Ontario. Bill 55 isn't offering any of that change. It's great that we're protecting a few people, but really, there's not a lot in that bill that's going to change Ontario and get us back on track.

I'd like to conclude my remarks, actually, by addressing my colleagues in the third party, if I could. This bill is an example of a government that lurches from one news story to another, with no actual vision of how this province should be run. We may disagree on the direction that we'd like to see this province go in, but we both agree that actual vision is actually needed in Ontario. If we let this scandal-plagued, visionless excuse of a government continue operating in Ontario, then everything it does from this Thursday forward—budget day—will come with an NDP stamp of approval on it.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your time—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Comments and questions?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** On that note, Speaker, I'm pleased to contribute to the debate on this consumer protection bill. Most of the measures in this bill are very small steps. Many of the bills presented, as we've alluded to, are baby steps, small steps. The Local Food Act—again, there wasn't a lot of meat on those bones, and this is the same kind of theme of a bill. There needs to be a lot of work done on this bill, and I'm looking forward to sending the bill to committee, hearing testimonies from experts—from people who are in the industry—about how to make this bill stronger so that there is better consumer protection for those people that are buying a home.

First-time homebuyers, second-time homebuyers, inexperienced consumers—I don't necessarily mean that they're the ones that are going to use this bill; people who are experienced, who have gone through a house sale, can still come across a salesperson who perhaps might need to have these regulations imposed so that there is that professionalism on both sides and so that the consumer's interest is protected.

This bill is going to work for everyone, whether they're a new consumer, a senior, a young person or a repetitive consumer, because we have to make sure the people that are delivering their services have the best service policies and best practices in mind, so that when there are contracts signed, both parties know what they're

going to get into. The consumer, of course, has to know what they're paying for and what kind of services they're going to get back from their hard-earned money that they're putting out.

We definitely feel that one of our contributions that we'd like to see in this bill is, perhaps, we're suggesting that it needs to have an advocate, a strong consumer advocate, so that consumers have a place to go when they have complaints. They're going to be listened to and their complaints will be followed up on and addressed—not just having that sieve approach where there's a complaint, it goes through the sieve and nothing is ever done.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** Let me say I'm pleased to provide a few comments on Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013. It was nice listening to my good friend from Prince Edward-Hastings; he spoke with passion, but in some regards, I have to disagree with him a little bit.

To the comments from the member from London-Fanshawe: There are little things in this bill that will help all of us and help the consumer, especially, because the bill touches on many areas that consumers require protection in. It's about door-to-door sales, debt settlement services and phantom offers, as he talked about.

I remember when I arrived here just over six years ago. The Legislature was talking about the deregulation process in the energy sector and the door-to-door salespeople in the energy sector. We implemented consumer protection for the things that were happening then, but you know, if you deal with your constituents on a regular basis, that door-to-door sales is an ongoing problem, because it's a lot of people that are trying to make a living at the door, and they'll use any kind of sales tactic to get someone to sign on a document.

If you look at what's happening, the same thing is happening now on water heaters. It happened on furnaces, it happened on the resale of gas and hydro, and it will continue. I think protecting the consumer will be an ongoing business of this Legislature, because as people out there learn many different ways to bypass the system or overcome any regulations we put in place, they will continue to do these things. The minister is responding to this, and I think it's the right thing to do.

1640

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to join in the debate. I want to thank my colleague and friend the member for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, and also my pal from Prince Edward-Hastings, for their comments about Bill 55, the consumer protection act. I appreciate the comments, the suggestions, the ideas about debt settlement, the real estate, the phantom offers.

But I want to pick up on what the member for Scarborough-Rouge River mentioned, and that's the door-to-door sales. I remember that when I first got involved in municipal politics 30 years ago, there was the issue of the



hawkers' and peddlers' licence. I remember issuing the hawkers' and peddlers' licences, and a huge issue being door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesmen. I remember, as a mayor, getting some angry calls that I should revoke the hawkers' and peddlers' licence and get that put out of the way, so it's just interesting that we're talking about door-to-door sales.

But you know what? We also, as politicians, are involved in door-to-door sales when we go out and campaign. I'm going to tell you a little story that happened in last fall's election. I was canvassing on Montrose Street.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** What were you selling?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I was selling myself, but I appreciate that. I was getting a pretty good response, but I had a couple of people who, when I came to the door, looked like, "Oh man, somebody else knocking at my door." So finally, the third door I knocked on on Montrose Street, a buddy of mine said, "Clarky, listen. We've had the hot water salesmen boys running up and down the street this morning. We had the city knocking on our door looking for unlicensed dogs. You're the third to the door. I'm afraid somebody is going to kill you just because you're the third person knocking on the door. We love you to death, we're going to vote for you, but pick another street that hasn't had the hot water kids and the city looking for dog licences." So I appreciate that door-to-door sales can be trying. We've all knocked on a few doors in our time.

I appreciate the comments from both of my colleagues. I look forward to the debate, as I always do, and I look forward to speaking—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. The member for Timiskaming—Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's once again an honour to speak on behalf of my constituents in Timiskaming—Cochrane, and for my first shot at G55, stronger protection for consumers. Once again, it's a great title.

It is easy to say that there is nothing in this bill, but there are a few little things in this bill. One thing I'd like to comment on is something that the member from Prince Edward—Hastings said. There are little things in this bill—this bill could make it a little bit stronger—but some of these little things make an incredible difference in people's lives. It's not just the province that has to deal with debt, but it's also people who have to deal with debt, and when somebody gets ripped off on a water heater or gets ripped off on Direct Energy sales or gets ripped off by a realtor—it's fine to talk about the province's debt, that's really important, but you have to also talk about people. I have people in my riding who got ripped off, and that makes a bigger impact in their lives because they have to pay for months and years.

My problem with this bill is, it just picks a few things, and what it has to do when it goes to second reading is actually make a difference in as many people's lives as it can. This is a really good template for a start. Maybe it happens on Montrose Street, but it happens in my town, and they target seniors, they target people who they know don't have a really high education level, who are just busy trying to make a living. They target them and they

pressure them. If this bill can do something to help those people out of that situation, then we should put it to committee and we should make it stronger so that it actually helps people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I'd like to thank the members from London—Fanshawe, Scarborough—Rouge River, Leeds—Grenville—my good buddy from Leeds—Grenville—Timiskaming—Cochrane, and the comments from the member from Prince Edward—Hastings during the main part of the bill.

I think it's interesting that we've brought up this issue. People talked about the door-to-door sales that have happened over and over again. The legislation by this government, obviously, has not dealt with that because we're back at it.

I think, as the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane said, it's a bill that doesn't have very much in it. It's hard to talk about it for very long. It talks about a couple of small issues, but it should go further. If you're going to deal with the credit and debtors, for example, why not deal with all of the issue?

We have issues where we have, for want of a better word, kickbacks from some of the lenders to these organizations. Clearly, if they're receiving revenue from both sides, there's a conflict, and I think we need to address that.

Why are we last in this country, again, with grasping new technology that makes our industry more competitive? We used to like to think of Ontario as a leader. Once again, it's an example of being in last place. It's time to move ahead.

I know that industry in this province does a good job. Sometimes there are bad apples. We may have to look at that. But, if we're going to bring out legislation, if we're going to do it piecemeal—it's like whack-a-mole, like the member from Prince Edward—Hastings said: When we're reading an article in the paper, let's hit that industry. Let's look at overarching legislation that deals with the whole consumer services area instead of just picking off one or the other.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much to my friends from the PC Party over there.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** We want to get you started good, there.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you. I appreciate that. It's a good start. I feel warm; I feel welcomed.

It's my opportunity to speak on Bill 55. Before I get into the details of the bill itself, I think I just want to start off with a little bit of preamble. Much like the bill starts off with some preamble, I've got some preamble as well. It's about stronger protection for consumers, and I actually want to build on the comments from my colleague from Timiskaming—Cochrane. He's absolutely right in the sense that sometimes we address issues here in

Parliament, or here in Ontario, and they are big issues with a big broad vision of what we can do to shape the province, and we talk about how we can make this province a better place on a broad lens.

Sometimes you do that. But, in a lot of ways, what impacts people more than that is actually what impacts them on a day-to-day level. What impacts them when they're going out and they're purchasing items? What impacts them in their pocketbooks and their bills? Those are no less important to an everyday person. In fact, in a lot of ways, people are more impacted and are more concerned about what impacts their lives daily, directly. It's important for us not to lose sight of that. Consumer protection is something that will impact people on a daily, regular basis.

My preamble is that consumer protection is an essential component of what we do here as government, as elected officials. We need to ensure that we implement different policies and legislation and laws that protect consumers, because many times consumers are vulnerable. There are some who are particularly vulnerable: those who are either in a socio-economic position which makes them vulnerable, or whether it's lack of education or literacy. Sometimes folks have language barriers, physical barriers, physical disabilities. These are all barriers that may cause more problems in life. Particularly where it comes to being a consumer, they may not know their rights and what they are entitled to and what information they require to make an informed decision. It's important that we protect the rights of consumers. That's why the ministry exists.

One underlying theme that I want to bring up is that in addressing the protection of consumers, there is a strong need for someone who will be advocating and promoting awareness about issues that consumers face, because many of the problems that people face when it comes to consumer issues—it's simply because of a lack of education. People just don't know. They don't know what they should be looking for or what they should be doing. They don't know what it means to sign a contract and what the obligations are or when they can or can't or how they can get out of it. Many of the problems that people face could be dealt with if they knew there is protection out there for consumers. They can return items that they're not satisfied with. They have rights that go beyond what the company you purchase from tells you, what the retailer tells you. There are consumer rights that exist beyond what a company's policies are. There are a number of protections out there, but people just don't know about them and how they can engage in them.

1650

I'll come back to this, but the concept of an ombudsman for consumers is something that we've talked about as a party, and I think it's an idea worth considering. If you have issues and complaints in the province of Ontario, you complain to the Ontario Ombudsman. Similarly, what if there was a dedicated position regarding consumer issues, someone that we could contact to get information in an easy-to-understand way, dealing with consumer issues? It's something to consider.

The bill deals with three major areas: debt settlement services, real estate issues as well as water heaters. Overall, yes, there are some small steps. I think, though, they provide a bit of a framework where we can address some of the things that need to be addressed. Let's look at it as a starting point, not necessarily a destination, and we can go through and see what areas need to be addressed more, what areas we can strengthen, and what areas are good as they are.

I'll begin with debt settlement services. One of the things that I've noticed about debt settlement services is the way it has been portrayed. If you look at the context, you have an individual who has either purchased items through their credit card or has a loan—whatever the way, they've overextended themselves, and they're in debt. Whether it's with a credit card company or a bank, either of those institutions will then transfer that debt to a collection agency. We have a collection agency whose goal is to recover as much as possible—or the bank directly wants to recover as much as possible, or the credit card company wants to obtain as much of that debt as possible. That's their goal.

You have the consumer who has racked up that debt and is in a position where they have money that they have to pay back. There's an agency that banks and credit card companies can turn to; they can outsource to a collection agency. What can a consumer do? What are the options for a consumer? The consumer can consult a lawyer, perhaps, but lawyers are quite costly and difficult, sometimes, to hire. If you're already in a situation where you're in debt, you may not have the ability financially to seek legal advice: What are your rights, what are your obligations, and what can you do? So who do you turn to? What are your options?

One of the options that are out there is debt settlement services. When we're framing the discussion about protecting consumers, it's a bit troubling to me that there's a lot of focus on debt settlement services and not on collection agencies. If you're a consumer, you know for sure that collection agencies aren't in your favour. They're not trying to help you. They're trying to help the banks they work for or the credit card companies they work for—which is fine; they're doing their job. Who's going to help the consumer? Debt settlement services is one option, and there are many debt settlement services that actually provide a great service, that actually help consumers. The fact that we're putting so much emphasis on debt settlement services as opposed to the collection agents, who are in fact the ones—if I'm a consumer, I'm more worried about the collection agents who are trying to get money from me, as opposed to the debt settlement services who ostensibly are trying to make my debts easier to pay back or to settle them for me.

There are some debt settlement services that provide services that are troublesome, that have some practices which we need to address and, I think, need to be fixed. But if you look at the good companies that are doing debt settlement services and what type of impact they have on consumers and compare that to the credit counsellors,



debt settlement services often can provide 40% to 50% on the dollar, with regard to debt. That means that if you owe a dollar of debt, debt settlement services—some of them, the good ones—are able to get you a deal where you only have to pay back 50% of that, which is great if you're in a bad situation. If you're in a tough situation and you don't want to file for bankruptcy and you want an alternative, that's a great alternative. That's a pretty decent savings for someone who might be in a bind.

Credit counsellors—if you look at their track record, it's closer to 80% to 90% of the debt, so 80% to 90% on the dollar. That means if you have a dollar of debt, they're trying to get you to pay back almost all of it, with maybe a minimal savings.

Again, when we're looking at legislating or regulating or protecting consumers, we have to look at the results, and it looks like, in many instances, debt settlement services are actually providing a good service for some folks and they're helping people out.

Why I bring up the contrast between these debt settlement services versus credit counsellors: It's interesting to know that credit counsellors are non-profit, not for profit, many of them, but if you look a bit further and look at their source of funding—and this was brought up by the initial speaker, who's not here now. He initially brought up this point, and it is a great point, that 80% of the funding—this is very important to note—almost the entire funding of credit counsellors comes from the financial institutions, whether it's credit card companies or banks. So their independence comes into question.

If you're getting most of your funding, if the majority of your funding in terms of not-for-profit charitable donations is coming from financial institutions, and your job is to help people settle their debts to financial institutions, then your independence becomes questionable. And if your independence is questionable, if it's uncertain whether you're actually being employed by the consumer or if you're actually working for the financial institution, then the advice that you give—obviously, if you're working for the banks, if you're working for their credit card companies, that's no fault of your own, but if that's the fact, it's probably going to be the case that you're going to encourage someone to pay back as much as possible.

I don't fault them for doing that, but I do fault them if they don't make it very clear and disclose that they're primarily funded by credit card companies or banks or financial institutions. If they don't make it clear that they have ties that question their independence and that their goals may not be to find the best deal possible for the consumer, their goal may be just to get them to pay back as much as possible. If that's the case, a consumer should know that going into it. If a debt settlement service says very clearly, "Our job is to work strictly for the consumer. We're working for you. You're our client. We're trying to get you the best deal possible," that's also important to know. So when making your decision about who you want to go to, you go to the person you think is going to do the best job for your circumstances. That's something that we need to look at.

Some of the points in the bill which make sense and I support and are legitimate: I think transparency is always a good idea, making sure that the contracts that are laid out between these service providers and the consumer—obviously, that's very straightforward and I think that makes a lot of sense, making it clear what the fee will be, how much is being charged for what service and a clear contract between the funds that you are contributing and where they're going and what the settlement will be, and at the end of the day what your fee will be for that settlement being reached.

That's the type of transparency I support. It's a good idea, and I think all members, all stakeholders, everyone involved in this, whether it's consumer advocacy groups or the debt settlement services themselves, would support that. So I don't think that's an issue.

Some of the details that the bill talks about make great sense. They include the name of the consumer, the debt settlement operator, the person that you're dealing with and anyone else who's dealt with you at the company. Those are all things that should be clearly laid out in the contract. It makes sense, and no one would deny that.

As I indicated, an itemized list of the services and all the fees that are paid, the details of the debts and the agreements that are set out—that is all appropriate. It's also important to include some sense of when the deadlines will be, when there's an anticipation of this being settled and how long this is going to last. Those are some essential ideas that make sense. One of the difficulties is that it's hard to predict when things will get settled, so some leeway in that area would make sense.

I also think that the idea of having a cooling-off period—if you do decide to choose to go with a debt settlement service agency, having a cooling-off period makes a lot of sense. Why not? If you're dealing with a company and you decide, "You know what? I've made a mistake. I want to go with someone else," having a 10-day cooling period I think is a sensible thing.

One of the other issues actually that I support is, I mean, misleading advertising—it's difficult to regulate that, and questionably, many people have misleading advertising across many industries. I support the notion that—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** You see it in politics every now and then.

1700

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My friend mentions that we see it in politics sometimes. I think that's true as well, that misleading advertising may be some of the reason why folks have lost their confidence in public institutions and in the political process. I think we all have an interest, as politicians and as consumers and as folks who are producing items and goods and are providing services, in making sure that your advertisements are legitimate and you back them up and they are not misleading.

Some of the areas, though, that are of concern, where they shift the balance of power between the debt settlement service and the consumer versus a collection agency, are that these are not to be paid out until a settle-

ment is reached. Why I question that is that it impacts the independence of the settlement service agency.

For example, if I'm working diligently and I provide transparency about what I'm doing and I have a clear contract about all the services that I'm providing and I'm working hard to try to get a good deal for my client, and on the other end the collection agency is just not agreeing—they're not going to settle and they are delaying their settlement; they're saying, "We're not going to settle for this amount," and they've put their foot down and are being stubborn—if I know that I will never get paid until this company agrees, then I may not work as hard to get the best deal possible. I might cave in to the pressure and say, "Okay, whatever. I'll increase the amount that we'll settle for," because I know that at the end of the day I'm not going to get paid until this company agrees. But if I know that I'm going to get paid, for the time I put in, a reasonable fee that makes sense and that's up front and transparent, then I'll put in the effort and I'll fight hard to try to get the lowest and the best settlement possible, and I know that my fee is not contingent upon the debt being settled but on my efforts and my attempts to make that happen and my advocacy for my client. I think there has to be a little bit of an understanding that we need to allow people to charge for the services rendered in terms of the time put in, and I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing.

I think that having some requirements that if you don't settle the debt, there might not be a full payment of your services because you haven't completed the task—but there should be some accounting that you put in the time, you put in the effort, you tried hard to get a service done for your client and you haven't necessarily achieved it.

Sometimes in law, as an example, it happens that you fight hard for your client but you don't win the case. You don't get paid if you don't win the case. If you still put in the time, you still put in the effort, you still prepare the case, I think it makes sense to have some payment, but the amount of payment can certainly be subtracted if the case is not completed. I think that makes sense. But again, it shifts some of the balance and the onus towards the collection agencies and it weakens the negotiating power of the debt settlement services.

Again, looking at the industry, I think there have been some complaints from some consumers. I've received some complaints from constituents that they've approached the debt settlement service and they felt that their situation became worse because there wasn't transparency and it wasn't clear what the agency was doing. It turned out they were putting money into a fund, but the credit company, the collection company, was increasing the amount that was due and there wasn't a clear sense of what the debt settlement service was actually providing in terms of a service, and their situation became worse because their debt just continued to increase. So there are circumstances like that.

I think what we need to do is make sure we have more extensive consultations with the community, with constituents, with both stakeholders, and figure out if those

are the anomalies, those are the exceptions, that it happens only once in a while where there are these problems and that, by and large, people are being benefited. Because if it's the case that people are being benefited, more so, then I think that this legislation may be misguided somewhat. If it turns out that, by and large, debt settlement services are actually helping people out, then we need to take a careful look at the way we regulate them to ensure that they continue to be able to do the good job of providing that service for people.

I think we need to do some further consultations, both with all the stakeholders involved and with the constituents that we represent, to make sure that we're actually doing something that's going to help people out and not hamstring folks who are trying to use a service that might help them out.

A bigger question that comes to mind when we're talking about these debt settlement services, before I move on to the other areas of this bill, is that I think it should cause us to pause for a moment and reflect. The fact that there's such an increase or such a rise in the use of debt settlement services means that we should question what the circumstances are in Ontario that are causing this to happen. Why are people having to rely on debt settlement services in the first place? What is the financial environment?

I think we'll see that much of it is due to difficult financial times. People are losing their jobs, they're not getting good employment, and they're in tough times. Part of it, though, will come down to proper use of credit. People are not very financially literate, and it's not their fault if they don't have—that's not a part of our curriculum; that's not a part of our education. We give someone credit cards and financial tools to borrow and you lend to them, but we don't provide them with the necessary tools to use that effectively and appropriately.

What if we had consumer protection that, any time we gave someone a credit card or a loan or any other financial tool, we had to, as an obligation, specifically explain, "Listen, just so you know, if you're taking out this much in terms of debt and you're only making this much, it'll take you 10 years to pay that off. So you need to reconsider if that's an option for you. If you are spending that on something that's like a car that's going to devalue anyway, that's probably not a sound decision"? There should be some advice up front so people know what they're getting into because many people don't really think about the repercussions of it.

While we are looking at debt settlement services as the end case when you've exhausted everything and you're in debt and then you need to get out of it, we can also, on the front end of that problem, give people some advice upfront, let them know what they're getting into upfront, let them know how to effectively use this credit and loans and these tools in a way that doesn't get them in the position in the first place.

When I talked about the issue of the credit counselling agencies versus the debt settlement services, they're both providing a similar service, and people need to know and



be educated and aware of who is working in whose interest. I think, again, this bill should involve some regulations that also cover credit counsellors, because they're not covered in this bill, and I think we need that to be a piece of this legislation. Where do they fit into the puzzle? They should certainly be regulated, along with debt settlement services—and disclosure and transparency about their affiliations. Like I said, the credit counselling agencies often are not-for-profit, but their business or their income flow—the majority of their revenue is generated from tax-deductible donations from creditors, calling into question their independence.

Debt settlement services are regulated right now under the Collection Agencies Act. That act, actually, has no details about debt settlement services in it. It talks all about the collection side, but it actually doesn't include anything about the debt settlement services side. If we want to regulate the industry, the act itself has to include something about the services they provide. I think that's a step that we should—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** That's an amendment.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Yes. That's definitely a step we should include. I notice the minister is giving me an assurance that that will be included, so that's great.

The other thing is that if we regulate debt settlement services, once they're regulated, they're licensed—they're recognized as being a licensed facility—they should also be given both responsibilities that they have to maintain—the responsibilities would be an ethic and a moral responsibility to provide the best service possible to their client within the legal limits of that ability to do so—but also, once we give them those responsibilities, they have to maintain a certain level of ethics and professionalism.

We should also infer or confer upon those services, those agencies—the debt settlement services—some benefits for being licensed. If they're licensed, on the one hand, there has to be a responsibility that they have to uphold a certain level of professional standards. On the other side, they should also be given some benefits for being licensed, and one of those is—as it stands, if a collection agent contacts an individual, that can be one of the most stressful things that someone goes through. Personally, I sometimes don't get it; it's just a voice on the other end of the phone. But to some people, that is the most stressful thing they can go through. They have physical reactions to that stress: They start to sweat, their voice starts to stammer, they feel nervous, they feel intimidated, they feel pressured. That is something that's very difficult for many people. To receive a letter in the mail from a collection agency saying, "You owe this money and you have to pay it or you'll be sued," that can just floor someone. That can simply just put them in a position where they don't know what to do; they feel hopeless.

1710

One of the things you can do if you have a lawyer representing you—a lawyer can contact the agency and say, "I'm representing this client. Please refrain from

communicating with them." By law, the collection agents cannot contact them further. But if you're from a debt settlement service and you do that, send that letter, that's not recognized. In fairness, if we are going to license and regulate this industry and confer upon them some responsibilities, they should at least get the benefit of being recognized as a service providing a service for their clients. If they indicate that they're now representing their client, a collection agency should stop contacting them, the same way they would if they were hired by any other organization.

Those are some of the issues and concerns that arise around the debt settlement service area, and I encourage the government to look at those concerns and those areas of improvement. At the end of the day, I think we can certainly craft something that will protect consumers and give them the tools they need to deal with some of the most difficult questions that people can face financially, which is, if you can't afford to pay your debt back, what are you supposed to do?

The second portion of the bill, schedule 2, talks about providing legislation for door-to-door sales, specifically with respect to the delivery and installation of water heaters. I think that this was a response to a concern—a real concern that exists in the community, exists in Ontario—so I recognize that the government has taken a step to address a real concern that people face. It is something that I hear about. I've actually experienced door-to-door salesmen that were quite aggressive on this issue, and luckily I was aware of my rights and aware of what I could do, so it didn't turn into a problem. But I know many people find themselves in positions where they don't know what to say. It seems as if the salesperson is representing themselves to be someone from the government, and it feels like this is an official transaction that's going on and they kind of feel compelled that they have to comply with the situation. They sign their signature not really being fully aware of what they're signing their name to. So, it's certainly a good idea.

What I'm concerned about is that it seems limited to the water heater issue. There are many door-to-door salespeople, and if we want to limit it to energy providers, it could be the water heaters but also the actual natural gas and energy providers. I think that would be a natural fit. To expand that not just to be the water heaters—which is certainly one part of the problem—but a natural fit would be the energy, whether it's hydro, electricity, and the gas. I think that's a natural fit; it all works together. Your water heater uses electricity and uses gas, so I think that's a natural fit. I think it should be at least expanded to that area so we're covering off that entire envelope of issues. That's one suggestion that I think is an easy suggestion that could strengthen this bill to make it more useful where it comes to consumers. I think that's a real issue that people face. We could certainly help out people in their day-to-day lives that way.

The cooling-off period, I think, is essential, and the fact that it's suggested to double it to 20 days from the 10

days is a good idea, a good starting point. I may even suggest increasing that a bit further. Sometimes you sign on something quickly and you want to find out, "Did I do the right thing?" It takes a couple of days for you to call around and get some advice. You're a little bit nervous; you're not sure. Giving a little bit of a longer time period to give that cooling-off period—we all live busy lives, and it's difficult to get to our tasks. Creating a bigger cooling-off period wouldn't be difficult to do, and I think it's something we should look at.

Whatever we agree to by hearing the concerns of the people—if this bill gets to second reading—during second reading when we hear from the deputants, we'd like to get their input and figure out what the best time is. But certainly during the cooling-off period, there shouldn't be any delivery or installation of any water heaters or any other items; there shouldn't be any changes to your contract, whether we include hydro or natural gas. There should be no changes during that cooling-off period so that it gives the consumer an opportunity to rethink their decision, to make sure they did the right thing.

Again, what we have to consider when we're looking at this protection is who is at home and who is being impacted by this aggressive sales tactic. Often when we're talking about the aggressive tactics of the door-to-door salesperson, we have seniors who are at home, who are retired, elderly folks. There may be people at home who are not in the workforce, so if they're not in the workforce they may not be in the workforce for a number of reasons. It may be because they're providing primary care for their children or their families. It may be because they are not as employable as their partner, and if that's the case, there may be a connection with that person having some barriers in terms of language, literacy or other issues. These folks who are at home may be more vulnerable people, and so it's more incumbent on us to make sure we give them more protection so that they know what their rights are and what they can and can't do. If we regulated some of the practices, some of the aggressive tactics that take advantage of these difficulties or barriers, we'd be doing the right thing.

Certainly, speaking to the language barrier, I'm speaking for many ridings across Ontario, I'm sure, but particularly in my riding that's certainly a barrier or a circumstance that people are facing and are more likely to be taken advantage of. In my riding, many times there are extended families, and both parents are working, the husband and wife are both working, and they have elderly grandparents, the children's grandparents—their parents—at home providing care for their children or just being taken care of by their children. Either way, we have elderly individuals in the home who don't have the best language skills, who aren't often as literate and aren't aware of what their rights are. If someone comes up and says, "I'm with the government. You need to change your water heater. Sign here," they may end up signing, not knowing exactly what they're signing up for. So I think it's very essential that, alongside this notion of

protecting consumers with regulations and banning during the cooling-off period, we have to have a strong education campaign to let people know what their rights are, what to expect, what they can prevent and what they are entitled to do, and that would address a lot of the concerns. Again, when I started off my comments, I said many of the problems, when it comes to consumer protection, can be addressed with education.

I have received a number of complaints from constituents who were approached by aggressive door-to-door salespeople who said that they were doing a government-mandated safety check, and they went in to check the safety of the water heater and said, "Listen, doing this government-mandated safety check, it turns out that I have concerns about the safety of your water heater." That makes people get alarmed and concerned, and it turns out the water heater is fine, there's absolutely no problem, but this aggressive tactic tricks people and takes advantage of them, and they think that they have to comply and they have to sign along and pay the extra fee.

So some of the things that I recommend to my constituents and some of the things that we could perhaps implement in an education policy: always ask for the salesperson's name; ask for the company, the company address and contact information—you can always ask to see company identification—and always, always feel free to take your time to consider your options. If someone tells you at the door, "You have to make a decision right now, that's it," chances are you're being had and you should not make the decision on the fly. There is no obligation to allow anyone into your home. If you feel uncomfortable letting them in—people don't know sometimes; they think that if it's a government-mandated check they have to let them in—you're absolutely not required to let anyone into your home. That is your sanctity, and you have charter rights which protect the security of your person but also protect you from having unreasonable access to your property or to your home, so you certainly can exercise those rights.

I certainly think that it's important to address this area. I think it's an important area to provide consumer protection. I think it should be expanded, so my criticism and my issue with the bill, as is, is that it's too narrow. It easily could be expanded, and it could provide a very useful tool to protect consumers across Ontario. I'd like to see that as something that we perhaps include in our discussions if this bill gets to second reading.

1720

The third area of the bill talks about real estate brokers. I think that's an area that also requires some attention. Again, some of the comments that were made by my colleagues to my right, talking about how this bill doesn't help small businesses, doesn't help provide bold, new ideas to get the province moving along—in fairness, the bill is consumer protection, so it's not going to do that. It's about protecting the consumer. We certainly need other bills and other initiatives to make small businesses flourish here in the province, and the NDP supports those initiatives, particularly when it comes to



enhancing our small businesses. Supporting farmers and supporting local Ontario businesses is something that we support wholeheartedly. But again, this bill is about protecting the consumer, so those are issues that we can address at a different time, just in response to that concern.

There are a number of issues with real estate brokers that I think we can do to help out the industry—that need support. One of those things was mentioned today, and I've been contacted by brokers in my riding, in my constituency, who have indicated that they want to be able to sign electronically. That's something that many jurisdictions across Canada and across North America are able to do right now. It's a simple thing. We have the technology. It would provide easier, quicker ways, more efficient ways, of conducting transactions, so I certainly think that's something we should do. Again, this bill is about consumer protection, so that's not something that will necessarily be addressed in this bill, but that's certainly something that I think the brokers have a right to.

There's also an issue about brokers wanting to incorporate themselves and their inability to do so at this time. I certainly encourage laws that would allow them to do that. If a broker wants to incorporate and expand his or her business, we should make that easier to do and not make that a barrier.

Talking about what is going on in the real estate industry: One of the problems that is a reoccurring theme is transparency. We want transparent governments that don't waste our money, we want transparent medical services that efficiently use our money and we want real estate agents that are transparent and disclose exactly what's going on. Transparency is a theme in all areas of our lives. We want to know what's going on. That's a human instinct, to know what you're getting into and wanting to know, that curiosity, but also it's a fairness piece. Transparency leads to more fairness, leads to more equity, leads to more justice. In this circumstance, though, ideas are not as lofty as justice, but it's a simple issue of not being misled to think that there are numerous offers on a home when there may not be, and not being led to increase your offer because you're concerned that you might lose out because there are all these other offers. Certainly, having transparency is a great idea that would protect consumers.

Particularly, if you look at the context, there's been a lot of talk about the bubble, the housing bubble, the economic bubble. I recently read—there are discussions that because they're printing off too much money, there might be not just a limited housing bubble but there might be an entire global bubble. The entire economy we are moving towards is inflated because of printing too much currency. These issues of inflation and these issues of not knowing exactly the true cost of something are things that are global, but just to bring it back down to our own communities and our own areas, in Toronto and other areas, if housing prices are inflated because the real estate agent makes it sound like there are multiple offers on a property and you really want that property, you

think, "Okay, listen, I have to increase my offer," and it turns out there weren't any offers on it, you've now just paid a considerable sum more on that property. Given these difficult economic times, every dollar counts, and you've just been put in a pretty financially disadvantaged position. I think we need to, in the broader context, make sure we're vigilant to protect people, and consumers deserve that protection. Having that transparency is good.

The way the bill reads is that they have to present offers to potential buyers in writing, and they'll be prohibited from suggesting or claiming that a written offer exists when one doesn't, so it would require having some clear transparency about the existence of the actual number of offers that are received. It would require having the Real Estate Council of Ontario work with the seller's brokerage to actually keep track of each property, and the offers that are placed on that property, so that you can, as a consumer, know legitimately if there are multiple offers on a property or not. I think that's just a fair way of giving consumers a fair chance at making a good deal on purchasing—one of the most expensive and meaningful purchases in your life is your home, right?

The other amendment that's brought up, and I question it because—in terms of its usefulness for a real estate agent and other brokerage firms, I'm sure they would see a benefit from it—so, providing a way for real estate agents to charge a combination of a percentage and a fixed amount. On the surface, I don't have a concern with that. I think it just creates multiple ways of getting paid. But it doesn't really directly benefit the consumer, and I think it might be somewhat misplaced in this bill. Giving the real estate agent the right to charge in a different way doesn't really help me out as a consumer. I don't care how I'm being charged—whether it's a percentage or a fixed amount, I'll be charged whatever I'm charged, as a consumer. The suggestion is that it might make it easier for online realtors to bundle their services, and other agencies—for example, staging, when you want to stage your home—a way to have a fixed price for the staging separate from the percentage price for the sale of the home. In that sense, it would certainly assist the real estate brokerage, and I think there's some merit to doing it, perhaps. But why it has found its way into a consumer protection bill, to me, seems a bit misplaced. I don't think it really adds up.

Just a real example about the bidding wars that can sometimes happen—although our housing is in a bit of a state of flux, there are still certain areas that are in high demand. Certain neighbourhoods are hot neighbourhoods, where people really want to purchase a home. In those neighbourhoods, bidding wars can sometimes be sparked without any real bidding war—it's almost like you're having a war with yourself. There have been significant complaints to the Real Estate Council of Ontario, also known as RECO—thousands of complaints of this nature where the buyers and the sellers were involved in this. There's a limited supply of homes that are in areas where people really want to live. In those areas, the realtors created a perception that there were multiple bids, and the family members were left trying to

increase and increase the amounts of their offers, and it turned out that there weren't actually multiple offers on those properties. RECO has been contacted about this issue. It is a real issue, that people feel that they're sometimes forced into a bidding war when there's actually no real—the demand is inflated. Again, it suggests the idea that transparency is something that would assist a consumer, and it's something that I certainly support.

In general, if we look at the bill—it has been said that it's a small step. Sometimes small steps can be good, if they're good small steps. Some of the steps here are beneficial to the consumer. I think they help. Some of them, though, need to be broadened and expanded so they can be more meaningful, and some of them need to be rethought.

The areas that need to be rethought—the first part of the bill, again, coming back to the debt settlement services. We need to rethink our goal. If we do further consultations and we find that the debt settlement services are actually helping out consumers, by and large; if they're actually benefiting people by providing them with a good service, then we need to rethink our approach to regulating them. If these services are actually helping people out and regulating them would hamstring or prohibit them from doing the good work that they've been doing, then we've done a disservice, and then this bill is actually not helping people; it's hurting people. So we have to be really careful about that.

On the face of it, I'm very, very concerned that credit counsellors have been left out of the regulation. When credit counsellors are primarily funded, 80% funded, by the credit card companies and the financial institutions, and they're not being regulated at all, but the debt settlement services, which, clearly, their goal is to provide services just for the consumer—there seems to be a bias, and I'm troubled by that. If we're going to enact legislation that protects the consumer, it should be very clearly in favour of the consumer and not in favour of the creditors by default or almost by subterfuge.

1730

We need to make sure that that's not happening here, and again I call for transparency of whoever the institution is, whether it's the debt settlement services or whether it's credit counsellors. Who is funding them? If they're not-for-profit, what's their primary source of revenue or primary source of funding, and does it impact their independence? Because if I'm in a difficult time and I'm in debt, I want to know that I'm turning to someone whose only interest is reducing the amount I have to pay back, whose only concern is making the best deal possible for me. And if their concern is that they're trying to get the most money returned because they're working for the banks, then we need to know that. That's on the debt settlement services.

With respect to the water heater issue, we need to expand that portion. Schedule 2 needs to be expanded. We need to deal with more than just water heaters. It has to be the energy sector, or the door-to-door energy sector, broadly. That's what we need to do in that area.

Then, thirdly, with the real estate agents, the transparency piece is certainly welcome, and it's a good piece to address.

The other issue about the mixed payments, the fixed and percentage, why that's in a consumer protection bill—I still question that.

What we have is an attempt to create a bill that's to protect consumers. So, when we're talking about protecting consumers, we need to look again, sometimes, at the bigger picture. One of the things that comes up time and time again is that consumers in Ontario are not well versed in what their rights are, so we need to have a broader strategy to educate consumers. We have a ministry that's directed toward consumer services, and it's incumbent on that ministry to do more than just present a bill, to also have a clear plan about awareness and education for the broader consumer.

One strategy to address this broader education and awareness would be a consumer Ombudsman. We can consider that in other areas of Ontario. If there's an issue, if there's a concern, you can complain to the Ombudsman. They can investigate, issue reports, delve into the issue and delve into the problems.

Similarly, for the consumer, we need to have a strong advocate that's independent, that's separate from government, that can investigate issues, that can provide advocacy on issues, and so that might be something that we should consider.

We know that there are a number of barriers for consumers; one of those I indicated before. A number of those are illiteracy, lack of language skills and perhaps physical disabilities. Another barrier is that if you are trying to get help or assistance when it comes to consumer affairs issues, and perhaps the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke might be interested in hearing this—people who want to actually initiate a claim, to go to Small Claims Court, need to get legal representation. If they're already in a difficult situation, they might need some legal aid. Right now, legal aid does not fund people for Small Claims Court situations, if they are faced with a water heater that they didn't want and it's thousands and thousands of dollars and they want to challenge that in court and say, "Listen, I didn't actually know what was going on," or, "I actually wanted this to be rescinded," or, "I wanted this to be taken back. That's going to be a \$10,000 water heater in my home; I can't afford that. I can't afford to pay for that."

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Sue me.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** We're going to sue some people.

But the person who might be in this position in the first place, who signed a contract for a water heater that they realized they didn't need—they didn't realize they were signing it—might not be the type of person who's as comfortable initiating a lawsuit, initiating a claim in Small Claims Court to get the money back. For those folks who show the financial need and show a case where they've been put in a position where they're financially very disadvantaged, we should, as a province, provide them with the tools to actually get a remedy. So that



means we've got to give them the way to get a lawyer. If we live in a system of rule of law and if you want to get a remedy, if you want to get the money back, the only way to do it is to go to court. If we don't provide people with the tools to get to court, then we're not really meaningfully protecting consumers. So along with an Ontario ombudsman, along with a campaign for greater education so consumers know what their rights are, what they're entitled to, what they can do and what they can't do, we should also have a mechanism so that if people are put in an unfair position, if people are put in a financially disadvantaged position, they can have access to a lawyer to help them out, to help them get out of that position.

Legal aid funding is something that's a problem in many areas. Whether it's the criminal justice system and the lack of funding for legal aid there, whether it's legal aid clinics in our communities which provide great services to our community members across Ontario, whether it's the refugee law clinics or poverty law clinics in general that are funded by Legal Aid Ontario and that provide very essential services to people who are some of the hardest-hit people in our society, legal aid is a way of balancing that equation. We have corporations and banks and businesses and the state, the government, who have all the resources possible and imaginable, and you have a consumer, a refugee, someone wrongfully accused, someone accused, with no resources and no access to justice. The small step we can take to limit and to balance that unequal equation is to provide legal aid funding. While it already exists for those other areas, some of those areas need to be bolstered and strengthened.

One other area is the notion of consumer legal aid. In certain circumstances, if you're hit in your pocketbook and you are down thousands and thousands of dollars and you are living paycheque to paycheque, having a lawyer to represent you to get some of those funds back could mean the difference between making your next month's payment for rent or not. It could mean the difference between having food on the table or not. So though we're talking about consumer services and a consumer—it may not seem naturally like something where you'd want to have legal aid protection, but it is an area that could certainly help people out in a real, meaningful way. So I ask the government to consider continuing to strengthen and protect the existing legal aid services, but also to give thought to creating a consumer service or a consumer legal aid across Ontario so that people who are in a tough situation can actually have access to a legal remedy.

One of the areas that we talked about when we talked about the Local Food Act and the idea of promoting local food was about educating children about the importance of nutrition, the importance of health, and how eating locally grown vegetables and produce would help them and make them healthier and more successful in school because they are able to focus better. Similarly with consumer services, we could start with young folks. As soon as children start to become consumers, as soon as they start to get out and buy things at the mall or buy things online or purchase items wherever they purchase

them, we should include in our curriculum some education for students. It should be a part of our education. We need to make sure people are more financially literate, that they're aware of what they can do, that they are aware of what credit cards are—that if you buy a bunch of stuff on a credit card today and it's fun and you get out there and you spend a lot, tomorrow you might have to pay those bills, and it might be very difficult. With 20% or 19% interest rates, that purchase that you bought for a certain amount might turn out to be double that if you don't pay that bill back.

We could start awareness of good financial literacy, of consumer awareness and protection, in our schools and make sure we have a curriculum for that so that children know how to use their monies properly, they know what credit is and how to use it, and they understand how to manage their consumer activity. I think that's something that we could do. Again, the idea is that if we put some education up front, if we teach people how to use credit and how to be financially literate—if you purchase something and you don't like it, what are your rights? Can you return it? For how long can you return it? What if the company says there's no return policy?

Well, the Consumer Protection Act actually says there is always a return policy. Even if a company doesn't advertise a return policy—people don't know this, but you can actually return goods if they're not used. In certain conditions, you can actually return things, but many people don't know that. If we start teaching that in schools so that kids know that, so our children and youth know that, they would grow up being educated and aware consumers, and it might prevent some of the problems of debt settlement services from happening in the first place.

1740

Another issue when it comes to the broad picture of consumer protection is that if there is an area of concern, a market failure or marketplace misconduct—there's something that the marketplace does wrong, something that a particular type of industry does wrong or hurts people—there has to be a stronger and a quicker way for government to remedy that or to respond to that. If we're seriously concerned about consumer protection, we have to have a quicker way of identifying problems and then solving them and remedying them.

For example, we've known about the water heater problems. We've known about the aggressive sales tactics when it comes to energy and when it comes to hydro and gas. We've known about these for years. As members of provincial Parliament, I'm sure everyone in this House has had constituents complain or have issues with that. The fact that it's taken so long to get the government to respond to this issue shows that we don't have a very robust mechanism to deal with this. It shouldn't be that we need to take this type of time to respond to issues that we've known about for years and years. We need to have a stronger way to identify problems and then to react to them, to fix them, so that the consumers are protected in a meaningful way. These corrective measures can be legal and involve refunds and

other remedial measures or corrective actions, but they have to be done swiftly because if you are in a dire situation economically, financially, and it takes months and months to get a remedy, the impact has already been felt. If you're living paycheque to paycheque and you're in a difficult situation, and your remedy for a marketplace misconduct, something they've done wrong, takes a year, you're already out a year. That's already going to devastate your life for that year. So it has to be quick and it has to be swift.

Again, when it comes to this bill, one of the things that we talked about in this House a number of times is the need for consultation. When it comes to some of the issues in this bill, I think that there wasn't sufficient consultation, particularly with the first piece, schedule 1. If we had an aggressive, wholesome, comprehensive outreach campaign to get input from the community and input from the people of Ontario, we could have a sense of whether this is the right thing to do or not.

I think, if Ornge and the gas scandal and the location of these power installations are any indication of how important it is for us to have good consultations—we need to know what the community wants before we deliver it. We need to know what the issues are before we try to answer them. As a government, as elected officials, as people in this House, we have to make sure that we have a better way of gauging what people want and what people need. If we do that in all areas of this government, whether it's consumer protection or health care or infrastructure or energy, we would do a much better job in this House—if we obtained the input from people in this province and meaningfully developed laws and enacted legislation that actually addressed their concerns directly.

The reason I bring that up is, again, good, thorough consultation with the public would have clearly brought up the issue that water heaters alone are not the issue. We needed to have expanded that to energy and to natural gas. That would have been an easy thing to obtain from the people if you had a good consultation process.

Debt settlement services: Again, I'm very concerned that there seems to be a bias against the consumer in this case. If we had a good consultation process that obtained input from the community, from the public, that this actually is helping us and not hurting us—and then finally, with the broader protections for the consumer—public consultation will tell you what we already know, that we need better education, better awareness in our consumers and in our public about what their rights are, and if we do that, we can make sure that their rights are protected and they are not taken advantage of.

Finally, in closing, I want to leave you with this: that if we're serious about consumer protection, one is the idea of providing education and awareness, and that education starts with our youth, with our young people. We can begin in schools by making sure our youth, our consumers, are aware of their rights and are financially literate. All too often, we notice that people don't have those basic skills. Even in university, they don't know how to manage their affairs, manage their money. That can be something that can be addressed in schools.

In addition to the actual education component and providing that throughout life—through media campaigns, through easy and clear literature, through websites, through accessible phone lines, call centres or help lines—and educating our youth, we also need to have a process for remedying the problem. If there is a problem and if there is an issue where someone feels they've been taken advantage of, if as a consumer their rights have been violated, there has to be a way for them to get a remedy, to get a fix for that problem. In our society of rule of law, that fix often comes from the courts.

If we want people who are down and out and who are in a tough situation and want to get a remedy and want to be able to get a refund or fix their financial difficulty as a result of a consumer rights violation, then we have to make sure we have some legal aid funding for those folks. Implementing a province-wide legal aid strategy to provide legal aid funding for consumer affairs and our consumer issues would be a meaningful way to complete the picture with education, legislation and a legal remedy through having access to the courts.

In conclusion, there's a lot of work to be done, but we can certainly make this province a better province for consumers by taking these approaches. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Just a couple of comments on the remarks from the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton—indeed, he has made a number of good, positive suggestions, which I appreciate.

I have to say, first of all, congratulations to the Minister of Consumer Services for bringing forward Bill 55, which aims to bring some changes to the Collection Agencies Act, the consumer act and the real estate and brokers act—all areas that I think need to be revisited and some changes are required so that we can offer more protection for our seniors.

The member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton has made a number of good points, especially with respect to further education and public awareness. It's unfortunate that sometimes what we do in this House and what results from some of this good legislation does not reach out to the people. Especially in my capacity as minister responsible for seniors, I know that many seniors are often taken by scams and con artists, if you will. They do need protection; there is no question about it.

The bill, I hope, will travel. I hope it's going to come back. I hope it's going to be a stronger bill and, indeed, we can offer more protection for all our people, not only seniors.

The three areas mentioned: collection agencies—I think it's a very active agency working in the public; the Consumer Protection Act; and, real estate—I think those are all areas that are important, that we take another visit for the interests of our people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** First of all, I want to pay respect to the member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton for speaking



for one hour on a bill that—there are more words in his speech than there are in the bill, actually.

That being said, I think it's important to look back and say that earlier today the member, our critic, from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry spoke. He shared his time with the member from Prince Edward–Hastings. I think for the viewing public here today, it would be worthwhile looking up their comments online in Hansard.

There was a compliment to the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton. He did spend a lot of time on a bill that's generally a feel-good bill. There's not too much to criticize.

1750

The question then becomes the detail: Does it go far enough? I think the NDP critic mentioned in his remarks, for one hour, which I did withstand—it's a long time to speak, and I commend you for that. But, as a lawyer, you did add some content that actually had some resonance in it. I liked the part about the debt servicing group, the debt settlement group specifically, what they offered compared to the credit counselling group. With the credit counselling, you have to look deeper and see how they're funded. They are actually funded by the financial institutions, as you know, the credit card companies, so they have a bias, if you will, coming into it.

But even at that, most companies, credit card companies included, on the credit counselling part or on the whole issue of debt, there's a whole bunch of terrorists out there in the marketplace, technically. They sell the debt. Whether it's Sears or Costco or whoever it is, they're selling the debt. They sell it for probably 50 cents on the dollar to these agencies that collect it. Now, if the agency can collect 80%—and they have no restrictions. There needs to be more clarity in some of the rules. I hope to be speaking on this sometime tomorrow.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for London–Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you, Speaker. I also want to say what a great job the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton did for an hour. He actually spoke to the bill with wonderful insight, stayed on the bill and what the content of the bill was. So thank you for your contributions. It's always wonderful to listen to what you have to say.

I think the theme of the bill or the idea of the bill is that Ontario consumers need protection. So this is the thrust of the bill, but what consumers also need is some serious oversight, like a watchdog, if you will. For some time now, that's what they've needed, because if a consumer in this province is scammed, for lack of better words, by some kind of predatory company, what are their recourses and where can they go? Right now, consumers have to fend for themselves. It's buyer beware.

Ontarians are busy raising their families or taking care of their elders, they're dealing with hard economic times, and they're also expected to protect themselves from companies, with far fewer resources than they have available to them when they are being scammed. At least

this bill is going to look at the debt agencies, the collection agencies; it's going to look at door-to-door sales and it's going to look at real estate. So those are three huge components of consumers' everyday—well, we don't want the collection agencies to be everyday transactions, but the sales door-to-door and often the home purchasing. So having the protection implemented in this bill is a good idea. But as we talked about, we need something to go a little further, and that consumer advocacy piece is going to go much further to help consumers so that they can have some recourse when they are in that vulnerable position and find themselves owing an astronomical amount of debt or in a contract from door-to-doors when they didn't realize what they were getting themselves into.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to rise today and pass comment on the comments from the member from Brampton–Gore–Malton. Let me start from the outset to say that sometimes I've been in this House when listening to somebody speak for an hour has been absolute torture, but listening to the member speak today, I actually found his speech interesting. I know how hard it is to talk about anything for an hour, and perhaps we should do a bit less of that maybe in the future. But I did get the key points coming out of the speaker's comments, and I think he did a very, very good job, because in the province of Ontario, we have such economic opportunity, and people come from all around the world to participate in that economic opportunity, but at the same time, some people in our society find it necessary to cheat people. Some people find it necessary to be dishonest, to be deceiving, to try to trick somebody into buying something they don't need. When you look at the points that are covered in this, I think the speaker did a very good job of talking about water heater rentals, for example, and the debt settlement services. When people are at their most vulnerable, people come in and prey on them. I think that's just wrong.

Also, when you talk about one of the major points in your life, having a baby, getting married, those types of things, buying a house is one of them. When you're participating in that economic exchange and you're not sure if the person that's representing you as an agent is deceiving you, there's something innately wrong with that and we need to do something about it.

I think the speaker was honest. He said we could do more, or we should be doing more. Perhaps he will have some suggestions for that at the committee stage. But I think all members of the House should agree that this should move forward. It's a step forward in three important areas. There's probably more out there. I would hope it would receive the support of the entire House, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I thank all the members that spoke. The minister responsible for seniors, thank you

very much; the member from Durham, my own colleague from London-Fanshawe, and the member from Oakville. I appreciate the glowing compliments. Please keep those coming. Thank you so much.

It is difficult, obviously, to talk about a bill for an hour. It could be the greatest bill in the world sometimes, but if the bill doesn't have that much substance, it's a lot of time to talk.

**Interjection:** But you did well.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I appreciate that.

In closing, I think I just want to reiterate so that it's clear that in those areas, the area of most concern, or the areas of most concern, are, first, the debt settlement services. Again, we have to really look carefully at whether we're actually protecting consumers or not. That requires us to look at what debt settlement services do and get input from the community, get input from the public, and if they're providing a better service or a good service, then the way we regulate them has to be different. If they're actually preying on people and hurting them, certainly our approach will be different. But from what I understand, they provide a great service, and in many circumstances the good ones are actually getting a better settlement than the credit counsellors. The credit counsellors also need to be regulated as well.

The second issue is, if we're looking at water heaters, we have to expand that, because it's a natural fit to add in the energy and the natural gas. Those are aggressive door-to-door salespeople and tactics as well. They need to be covered. It's a natural fit. Let's include those in that discussion.

Finally, if we're serious about consumer protection, there has to be advocacy, which involves education. Let's begin that with our youth, with our students in schools, and let's end that with having a legal remedy by affording legal-aid-funded representation to people who are financially eligible so that they can actually get a remedy in court.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed having been made.

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

### PAN AM GAMES

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Barrie has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given last Thursday by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The member has up to five minutes in which to make his remarks.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** If you wish to wait a moment as people leave, we'll do that.

I'd invite the member from Barrie to begin.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** Speaker, we're here today because the last question I asked in the Legislature to the minister

received a pre-written response from recycled briefing notes from an answer that was actually given the week before.

I asked the minister to explain how a deputy minister of a duplicated organizational structure of the Pan Am Games, specifically the Pan Am Secretariat, has received a 140% raise over the last three years. This comes at a time of supposed wage restraint that this government continually talks about whenever we ask for an across-the-board wage freeze for our government. I don't think a 140% increase over three years represents any wage restraint.

I compared this rate of increases with other managers in the Pan Am secretariat. Other managers and other high-level officials in the Pan Am secretariat received between 1% and 18% pay increases over a period of three years, which is the same period of time that this deputy minister actually received a 140% pay increase.

**1800**

I find it really difficult to believe that any person, especially this deputy minister, has performed 120% better than his peers. In fact, his peers have sent brown envelopes to me. They're the ones who alerted me to this—his own peers, his own bureaucrats within this same structure, expressing their outrage. That's where this came from: from his actual peers. To quote the public servant who notified me of this: "This place is a mess, and it will be the next big boondoggle." As if this government needs any more boondoggles than it already has. Worse still, "many bureaucrats have raised red flags, but senior leadership doesn't listen and is completely ineffective."

I would hope that the minister is on top of this. I know that the minister is very capable of keeping an eye on this duplicate bureaucracy.

We can be fairly certain that these uncharacteristically sky-high raises that this DM has received are not likely performance-based. That's my concern. I want to see the minister and the ministry actually justify this raise and tell me, please, that it's performance-based and how it's performance-based, Minister.

I suggested that the multiple thousand-dollar donations to the Liberal Party and getting a job through Liberal friends, specifically Jean Chrétien, or volunteering on Liberal election campaigns, may have factored in. I hope that's not the case, but it seems to me that that is the case, and that's a cause for concern for me.

The response last week on this question just reiterated pay schedules as an excuse. I understand there are pay schedules. I can't believe that any pay schedule would actually advocate for a 140% increase. I don't blame the deputy minister for this increase. If someone offered me a 140% pay increase, I'd probably want it, too. I'd probably take it, too. This is a direct result, I think, of mismanagement and lack of actual oversight for this ministry. This minister is new. He's got a chance to make it right.

This was followed by an answer recycled last week prior to when I asked why we have a second bureaucracy



organizing the games totalling 62 people. TO2015 is in charge of organizing the games. Why do we have a second bureaucracy in the secretariat of 62-plus people, many of them on the sunshine list, making a lot of money? Even people in TO2015 are wondering why there's a bureaucracy duplicating the very work that they're doing. It doesn't make any sense.

We're in a time of fiscal restraint here. We have an opportunity for these games to actually bring to Ontario and to Toronto specifically, and the greater Toronto area, a lot of highlighting on how this country, this province and this city can be a world-class representation of what Canada's really about, not a showcase for Liberal waste.

My question about whether the minister thinks it's appropriate that a well-established Liberal partisan lead this duplicate bureaucracy and receive an actual 140% pay increase over three years went unanswered. I think the minister probably does have an answer, and I'd love to give him a chance to actually come up with an answer on, hopefully, why there's a duplicate bureaucracy and why the person running that bureaucracy, the deputy minister in charge of that bureaucracy, has been given a 140% pay increase over the past three years, compared to his peers in that same secretariat, who only got between a 1% and 18% pay increase. What is it that defines him as a 120% better performer than his peers?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The minister has up to five minutes to respond.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you very much for the question. The people of Ontario are proud and honoured that we are hosting the Pan/Parapan American Games in 2015.

It's because we won the bid for the games that the member opposite's federal cousins are investing \$500 million in sport infrastructure to support them and to support Ontario. These are big investments for a big legacy. Just like the federal government, we, too, believe in the games, and Ontarians want the best of the best when it comes to overseeing them.

Just like the federal government's secretariat through Sport Canada, we have our Pan/Parapan American Games Secretariat, and just like the federal government's hard-working public servants, along with members of TO2015, we also have dedicated people who are working to bring the games to Ontario.

Speaker, Deputy Minister Paul Genest is one of those people. He was appointed to our secretariat because we believe he is the best talent for the job. I do not know why the member opposite attacks him, and, in doing so, attacks everyone working to bring these great games to Ontario.

Deputy Minister Genest was formerly the Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and associate secretary to the cabinet from 2009 to 2012. The member holds degrees in English and philosophy, but—perhaps intended—failed to mention he has one bachelor's degree, two master's degrees, a doctorate degree and has also completed the advanced management program at Harvard Business School.

Not only is Dr. Paul Genest the Deputy Minister of the Pan/Parapan American Games secretariat; he is also currently the deputy minister responsible for francophone affairs, and I think it is wrong for the member to attack him.

Speaker, we are very, very proud to host the games, which will be a key economic driver in the region over the next few years, creating 15,000 jobs and a further 5,200 jobs related to the athletes' village.

Two weeks ago, on April 16, the member opposite announced his Pan Am accountability tour. I am really very interested to hear what his thoughts are on our progress because, on the same day, our province hosted a delegation of the Pan American Sports Organization for a three-day tour of the games' venues. The feedback we received from this international commission was overwhelmingly positive. Mario Vázquez Raña, the long-standing president of PASO, was quoted as saying this will be "the best Pan Am Games ever."

Speaker, the member has attacked the people and the games numerous times, but I really want to encourage him to be responsible and do diligent research when speaking about them. The member has made statements which require clarification. For example, the member recently claimed that additional costs were added to the athletes' village. In fact, the overall project costs for the village have not increased. It's a project with tremendous significance, and it's moving quickly, creating jobs now and after the games. There will be a new, vibrant community, which thousands of Ontarians will call home.

The member opposite also recently claimed that funds were wasted on developing lands for a velodrome in Hamilton. To be clear, provincial funds were not used, and the town of Milton is, in fact, excited that it will be getting the world-class velodrome.

Today, all the games capital projects are on or—listen to this—under budget. It's one thing for the member opposite to criticize and attack myself and this government for ensuring that we, as a province, deliver the best Pan and Parapan American Games ever, which we will do, but it is completely wrong to attack a hard-working public servant.

I want to thank Deputy Minister Genest and everyone—paid employees and volunteers—who have been working tirelessly to bring the games to Ontario.

## SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Timmins-James Bay has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given today by the Minister of Education. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Listen, we know that government over the past number of years—starting with the then Minister of Education, which was Kathleen Wynne—decided to turn busing for children in this province around on its head. We used to have a system where school boards had a list of people who were competent,

who knew how to run the business and provided services that were not only safe but also very cost-effective to the people who they had to transport. That system worked well for a number of years, and for years in this province we had a busing system that delivered services at the best possible price, and, at the same time, making sure that our kids were safe. Guess what, Madam Speaker? It really supported the small business industry in this province.

1810

The Liberal government decided, "We've got to change that. We've got to turn everything around." So they moved to a new RFP system that essentially says that now, when you are bidding on a bus contract in order to get runs to deliver children within a particular school board area, there is a process that has become so expensive and onerous and difficult for small businesses that many of them have not been able to bid on the system for the contracts, and those who have bid have been at a disadvantage compared to the larger multinationals who have come into the market to provide those services to the students across this province.

Well, we've seen what has happened, and here, a couple of years later, the only reason we don't have a complete decimation of the industry is because the independent bus drivers have filed a lawsuit, and that lawsuit has put a hold on that policy for the time being. But what we have seen is bus company after bus company close its doors in this province as a result of this particular policy. We know, for example, that in Cornwall the Trillium bus company has gone under. They closed why? Because they did not get contracts under this new system. In Timmins we saw the Kamiskotia Bus Lines, the Schumacher Bus Lines and others close their doors and close down businesses after 50, and another one after 100, years because of this system. We saw that in Barrie, Allandale School Transit lost 60 runs and as a result had to close their doors and are now closed and out of business; Stinson Bus Lines the same. The list goes on and on.

The question I was asking the minister today is, in an interview that she did with the Toronto Sun, with Christina Blizzard, she essentially said that's only the perception of the ministry, that in fact small and medium-sized lines are receiving more contracts as a result of this particular policy. Well, that's not the case. We've had over—what is it now? I know over 30 bus lines have shut down as a result of this policy, and what we've got now is more and more of the business being done by the large multinationals. The problem I have as a New Democrat is, who speaks for small business if it isn't this Legislature? We shouldn't be creating laws and regulations that essentially say we give everything and the largesse to the larger multinationals. In fact, we should do the opposite. We should try to find ways for mom and pop operators across this province, in ridings like Timiskaming, mine and others, to be able to stay in business and do those things that they do well.

Now, I know what the minister is going to say because I talked earlier to one of your colleagues in cabinet whom

I am not going to name, who said that in fact the complete opposite is true. I'm being told, "Oh, my God, all of the contracts are now going to the medium-sized businesses and they're not going to the large multinationals, and the proof is in the pudding." She's going to get up and say that everything is wonderful in Ontario Liberal land. Well, it's not. The reality is that you have shut down bus lines across this province by at least 30 firms. That is what's happened. That is the record. You can't run away from it. What we're saying to the government is that what we've learned with privatization of winter road maintenance, what we've learned with the privatization of other initiatives in this province, is that once you've pushed out the small independent operators and you've given it to the larger entities, what they end up doing is jacking up the price when they become the only deliverers of the service, and then we end up paying more for a service than we would have ever before.

I'm just saying that this government should take heed and should put a halt to this policy. In fact, what they should be doing is looking at a way we can continue to make our system as competitive as it was, to make sure that it is as safe as it can be, and that we actually favour those small businesses that have been operating—family businesses—for generations in this province, that have been delivering a safe, reliable and affordable service to the people of this province. I call on the government to do so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The minister has up to five minutes to respond.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you. I am very pleased to respond.

I think we need to sort out our history here. When this whole business around school buses and school boards came up, the issue was originally raised by the Auditor General. When the Auditor General had his mandate extended to go into school boards, one of the first things he looked at was procurement. In particular, one of the first things he looked at was the procurement of school bus services from private operators. Remember, we have always been talking here about procuring services from private operators. And he said that the school boards, almost uniformly, had totally non-competitive ways of procuring school buses.

As you know, I used to be a trustee, so I do have some knowledge of how this system used to work, and how it used to work was that you had your retinue of operators and you sat down and the retinue of operators came and told you how much they thought it would cost to operate the service and how much the bill was.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No, no. Then the school board said, "This is how much we're paying."

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** There was more give-and-take to it than that. What there certainly was not was a competitive procurement. There were a whole bunch of operators sitting there saying, "This is how much we're going to charge you, and if you don't pay what we want to charge you, we will withdraw the service collectively."



*Interjection.*

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I've been involved in the conversation. Don't tell me. I've been sitting at the table, okay?

The auditor had some truth to what he said, which is that this is not a competitive situation. So the direction was to have a competitive procurement. Has it worked perfectly? No, it hasn't. It was a new way of doing things, and there have been some hiccups.

Having said that, when you look at the data and you look at the boards that have gone through some form of competitive procurement, and you look and you say, "How many of the local firms held the routes pre-competitive procurement?"—39%. Then you look, post-competitive procurement, at how many local firms and what market share—49%. The market share of local firms actually increased.

As I say, we know there have been some challenges. In fact, at one point we asked Coulter Osborne—and you have been around long enough to know that he was the former Integrity Commissioner. We actually asked Coulter Osborne to head a task force on competitive procurement. He set out some guidelines for the way that it should work. He recommended the use of a fairness commissioner. We totally agree. He suggested bundling routes—not in huge bundles, but grouping the routes; here are 10 routes; here are five routes in this direction; here are another 15 routes in that direction—rather than doing great, big blanket procurements. We agree with that.

He suggested that there be time built into the system for questions and clarifications so people know exactly what the expectations are around how they're going to be scored and the details that are required in the procurement. We agree with that.

He suggested that there should be market share limits in the procurement to limit the number of routes that any one operator can hold. I totally, totally agree with that, because if a board does that properly, they can set limits that no one operator can hold more than 10% of the routes or 20% of the routes or maybe 25% of the routes. If you do that, which is to set a limit on market share by any one operator, you in fact can prevent the takeover by the big firms and some sort of the fear of a local monopoly.

We will continue to work with the school boards and with the consortiums because we agree that the process needs to be improved for both the boards and the operators, but that doesn't mean that we should go back to a system where the taxpayers' interests were not protected.

Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you very much.

There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1819.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Crait, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakubski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margarett R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

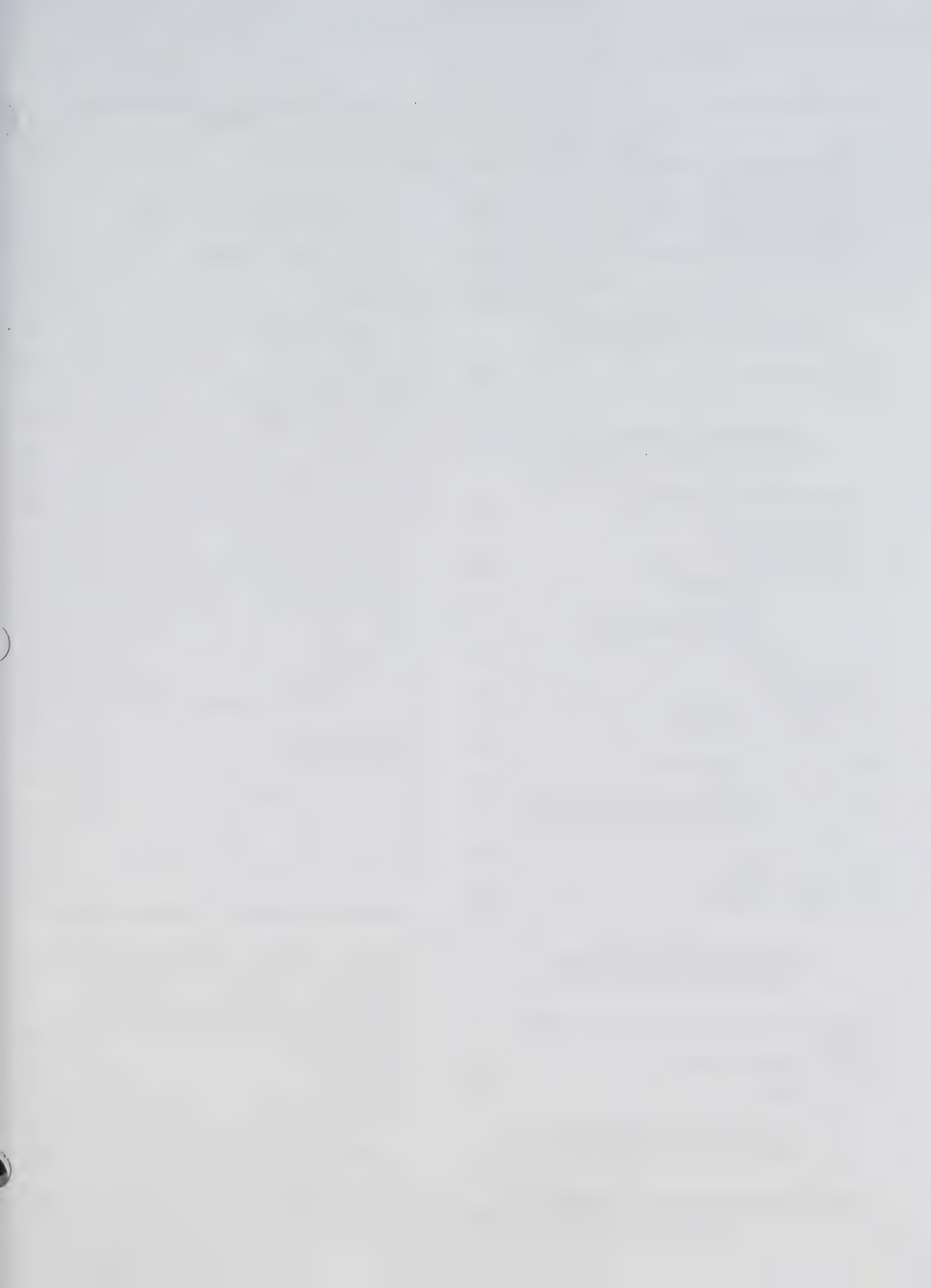
**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margarett R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











*Continued from back cover*

## **Visitor**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) ..... 1665

## **Correction of record**

Mr. Victor Fedeli..... 1665

## **Notice of dissatisfaction**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) ..... 1665

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Jonah Schein..... 1665

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Traditional Chinese medicine**

Mr. Todd Smith..... 1665

### **Carnation Revolution**

Mr. Jonah Schein..... 1666

### **Organ and tissue donation**

Ms. Helena Jaczek..... 1666

### **Victim Services Award of Distinction**

Mr. Norm Miller ..... 1666

### **Bangladeshi protest**

Mr. Michael Prue ..... 1667

### **Prévention de l'intimidation**

M. Phil McNeely..... 1667

### **Michelangelo prosthetic hand**

Mrs. Jane McKenna ..... 1667

### **Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association conference**

Mr. Bill Mauro ..... 1667

### **Agriculture industry**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece ..... 1668

## **REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

### **Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs**

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn ..... 1668

Debate adjourned ..... 1668

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Technical Standards and Safety Amendment Act, 2013, Bill 61, Mr. McDonell / Loi de 2013 modifiant**

### **la Loi sur les normes techniques et la sécurité, projet de loi 61, M. McDonell**

First reading agreed to..... 1668

Mr. Jim McDonell..... 1668

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Traditional Chinese medicine**

Mr. Todd Smith..... 1669

### **Pan Am Games**

Mr. Rosario Marchese ..... 1669

### **Agri-food industry**

Mr. Bill Mauro ..... 1669

### **Ontario College of Trades**

Mr. Monte McNaughton ..... 1670

### **Pan Am Games**

Mr. Jonah Schein..... 1670

### **Electoral boundaries**

Ms. Soo Wong..... 1670

### **Ontario College of Trades**

Ms. Laurie Scott ..... 1670

### **Traditional Chinese medicine**

Mme France Gélinas ..... 1670

### **Family caregiver leave**

Mr. Bill Mauro ..... 1671

### **Government's record**

Mr. Jim McDonell..... 1671

### **Utility transportation vehicles**

Mr. John Vanthof..... 1671

### **Agri-food industry**

Ms. Soo Wong..... 1671

### **Hospital parking fees**

Mr. John O'Toole..... 1672

### **Mining industry**

Ms. Sarah Campbell ..... 1672

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

### **Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013, Bill 55, Ms. MacCharles / Loi de 2013 renforçant la protection du consommateur ontarien, projet de loi 55, Mme MacCharles**

Mr. Jim McDonell..... 1672

Mr. Todd Smith..... 1676

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 1681

Mr. Bas Balkissoon ..... 1681

Mr. Steve Clark ..... 1681

Mr. John Vanthof ..... 1682

Mr. Jim McDonell ..... 1682

Mr. Jagmeet Singh ..... 1682

Hon. Mario Sergio..... 1691

Mr. John O'Toole .....	1691
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	1692
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	1692
Mr. Jagmeet Singh.....	1692
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	1693

# **ADJOURNMENT DEBATE / DÉBAT SUR LA MOTION D'AJOURNEMENT**

## **Pan Am Games**

Mr. Rod Jackson.....	1693
Hon. Michael Chan.....	1694

## **School transportation**

Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	1694
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	1695



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 30 April 2013 / Mardi 30 avril 2013

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

<b>Skin Cancer Prevention Act (Tanning Beds), 2013, Bill 30, Ms. Matthews / Loi de 2013 sur la prévention du cancer de la peau (lits de bronzage), projet de loi 30, Mme Matthews</b>	
Mme France Gélinas .....	1645
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	1651
Mr. Todd Smith .....	1652
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	1652
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1652
Mme France Gélinas .....	1653
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1653

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1653
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1653
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1653
Mr. Phil McNeely .....	1653
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1653
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1653
Mr. Michael Harris .....	1653
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	1653
Hon. David Zimmer .....	1653
Mr. Todd Smith .....	1653
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1654
Mr. Rick Bartolucci .....	1654
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1654
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1654
Mr. Frank Klees .....	1654
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1654
<b>Legislative pages</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1654

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

<b>Power plants</b>	
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1654
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	1654
<b>Government's record</b>	
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	1655
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1655

### Power plants

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1656
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1656

### Power plants

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1657
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1657

### Power plants

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1658
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1658
Hon. John Milloy .....	1659

### Cancer treatment

Mme France Gélinas .....	1659
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1659

### Air quality

Ms. Soo Wong .....	1659
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	1659

### Government's record

Mr. Ted Arnott .....	1660
Hon. John Milloy .....	1660

### Power plants

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1661
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1661
Hon. John Milloy .....	1661

### Flooding

Mr. Grant Crack .....	1661
Hon. Linda Jeffrey .....	1661

### Power plants

Mr. Bill Walker .....	1662
Hon. John Milloy .....	1662

### Cancer treatment

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1662
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1663

### Research and innovation

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1663
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	1663

### Government's record

Mr. Rob E. Milligan .....	1664
Hon. John Milloy .....	1664

### School transportation

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	1664
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	1664

### Animal protection

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti .....	1665
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1665

*Continued on inside back cover*

A20N  
K1  
D23



No. 34

N° 34

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 1 May 2013**

**Mercredi 1<sup>er</sup> mai 2013**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 1 May 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 1<sup>er</sup> mai 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

## WEARING OF UNIFORM

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nipissing on a point of order.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. I rise to seek unanimous consent to allow me to wear my Algonquin Regiment dress uniform for a one-hour period this afternoon for a member's statement and a petition.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nipissing has asked for unanimous consent to wear his uniform during members' statements and petitions. Do we agree? Agreed.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### NON-PROFIT HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2013

### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 25, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 14, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I rise to speak to Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act. I want to again acknowledge all the members of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada who are, indeed, here today. We did have a chance to speak beforehand, as we have on other occasions, and I am pleased to speak to their bill. We did have occasion to go to Burlington with the member from Leeds–Grenville and the member from Burlington and visit with Harvey and the

gang—I hope you don't mind my casual nature, Harvey—and saw the important work that is being done by the Co-operative Housing Federation.

A little later in my speech, I'll be talking about the housing co-op in North Bay, specifically, in my riding of Nipissing.

This legislation would amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, and the Co-operative Corporations Act to move most co-op tenure dispute cases from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board. It also aims to streamline the internal dispute resolution process in non-profit co-ops, to clarify that hearings before the LTB—the Landlord and Tenant Board—and courts will be determined based on the merits of the case.

It should be noted that our party and our caucus supported this bill when it was introduced last year by the then Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, now the Premier. However, it fell victim to Dalton McGuinty's prorogation, and it should, quite frankly, already have become law. The delay created by the Liberals' own doing has potentially cost co-op members hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary court costs, as the rules the bill was intended to fix still remain in place.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Contrary to the Premier's stated desire to work with the opposition, this new bill contains an unnecessary amendment that will open the floodgates to nuisance applications to the Landlord and Tenant Board, causing turmoil in a system that is already horrendously backlogged. This amendment will harm both landlords and tenants, as it will further hamper the LTB's ability to hear cases in a timely manner.

Let me first discuss how this bill would move tenure disputes from the court system to the Landlord and Tenant Board, where all other housing disputes are actually settled. While not without its own problems, clearly the LTB is the appropriate venue for housing disputes. These disputes include rent arrears, late payment of rent, willful damage, and illegal activity by tenants or interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of their property.

The ministry estimated the cost of resolving these co-op disputes in the courts at \$3,000 to \$5,000 each, and pegged the annual legal cost to co-op members of the approximately 300 cases heard in the courts every year at about \$1 million.

Some disputes not provided for under the Residential Tenancies Act would still be resolved between residents and co-ops through the courts, including violation of no-pet provisions or failure of a co-op member to perform



duties such as clearing snow or cutting the lawn. The act would affect 125,000 Ontarians who live in the province's 550 non-profit housing co-ops.

The new bill also contains an amendment to allow the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive the \$45 fee for low-income tenants. In a briefing, ministry staff could not say who would qualify as a low-income tenant, as this would be a determination made by the Landlord and Tenant Board on a case-by-case basis as now happens in the provincial courts.

Obviously, Speaker, it's disturbing that a one-sided amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Board would be considered without widespread consultation. Landlords are certain to cry foul, and justifiably so. From their perspective, this will open the door for every minor dispute disgruntled tenants may have to the LTB. The dispute resolution system could very quickly become overwhelmed, which serves no one's interests.

These hearings would only cause further delays in the already backlogged LTB system. Speaker, this is bad news for landlords and tenants who have legitimate cases before the board that they need resolved in a timely manner. Further, the fee is a cost recovery for the board's operation, which means that Ontario taxpayers, or higher fees for landlords, will be called on to subsidize revenue shortfalls.

Speaker, I'd like to take a few moments now to discuss the rental housing situation in my riding of Nipissing, and how Bill 14 could potentially impact landlords and tenants in the communities I represent. For years, Nipissing—specifically the city of North Bay—had no housing constructed. When I ran for mayor back in 2003, the summer before there were only seven houses built. During the heyday in my term we had 107 houses built.

0910

During those years of seven houses a summer being built, we found ourselves with a tremendous shortage of housing, not only single-family housing but all types of housing. From there, we found in our social service board studies that we had a need for 1,000 affordable housing units. That was an alarming statistic, a very scary number to be told as a sitting mayor.

One of the problems is the fact that we had no rental housing—virtually none. It was less than 1%, as it still is today. Because the economy turned around back in the early 2000s in the city of North Bay, that housing, those few houses that were built, was taken up quickly. Housing prices soared. Very, very few rental units ever came available, because the prices were rising, and we had less than 1%—it was a fraction of 1%—of rental housing available on the market and very, very little turnover.

One solution we saw was our co-op housing. I want to speak to the good work of Mr. David Lee, the director of the co-op housing organization in North Bay. Back when I decided to run as an MPP, I campaigned. I was invited to and was the only candidate to show up at the co-op housing forum. My wife, Patty, and I spent the better part of the day with them. We had a lovely time learning about the co-op housing work that is done. I found it to be very

enlightening. I as mayor had an understanding of our co-op housing situation in Nipissing, but this put it on a personal level, to sit and barbecue with the families, to play ring toss and the balloon games we had with the kids, and to understand the pride they took in their housing. To go with the member from Burlington and the member from Leeds–Grenville into Burlington, to the housing co-op, and talk one on one and share lunch, a beautiful luncheon, with the members of the co-op housing organization there was a real experience. I encourage all members of the Legislature to get out of the Legislature and into the co-op housing throughout Ontario and learn for themselves the importance of this housing.

In closing, this bill merits support on second reading, because province-wide hearings are needed on the amendments contained in this bill. I expect landlords and tenants will have plenty to say surrounding Bill 14's recommendations surrounding the LTB. At the end of the day, we want a system that is fair and works for all involved. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** We New Democrats want to see this go to committee quickly. We would like to see the debate ended. All that should have been said has been said. Quite frankly, right now our friends to the right of us, the Progressive Conservatives, threaten this bill from even getting through the session, because if we don't pass it quickly it might get stalled by the whole budget process, and who knows what happens after that? We really need to move on this. That's why we're not going to take our whole time in the New Democratic Party. We want to see it go to committee today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I want to recognize some of the people that are in the gallery this morning from the Ontario region of the Co-op Housing Federation of Canada: Harvey Cooper, manager of government relations; Diane Miles, manager of co-op services; Judy Shaw, program manager of co-op services; Simone Swail, program manager, special initiatives; Keith Moyer, program manager of communications. They have been here relentlessly. They want to see this bill passed. It will help a lot of people, a lot of vulnerable people. We've debated this bill for 13½ hours. Let's send it to committee today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I really want to pay some respect to the member from Nipissing for his thoughtful and sincere remarks with respect to the importance of social housing in Ontario. In a climate of a housing shortage—at least affordable housing—it's an important component of that supply mix.

Both the NDP and the Liberal Party are making the point that they want to rush this to committee. I should say that the reason it's stalled here, I think the members from the co-op community should be aware—this is the third bill that has been debated here. The reason it wasn't

already in committee and out is because of the previous action by Premier McGuinty to prorogue the House, where all the business of the House failed. Now, I know that they know that, but I know the people of Ontario don't know that.

The reason is that this is a very important and timely bill. I would put this to you: There's a very good chance that it may not get to the statute level again. This government is disingenuous in many respects to the energy file that we were dealing with yesterday, so I have little confidence that this indeed will get to committee.

The committees themselves are basically dysfunctional now. The ones dealing with Ornge as well as the gas plants are perfect examples of a government that cannot manage its legislative agenda.

The member from Nipissing and we ourselves want to do the right thing and want to put a voice to this legislation. That's why we're using our time to make sure that the people of Ontario understand who's really holding it up. They're the government. They have the rules, Mr. Speaker, to make the changes, to time-allocate this bill and put it into a committee. If they really want to do that, they could do it. So don't blame it all on Tim Hudak and the Conservatives for actually speaking to the content of the bill, as the member from Nipissing did. I think it's an important bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I also want to welcome the co-op folks here once again. It's always great seeing their smiling faces. I know that, once we get this bill to committee, I will miss those faces being around this House. But again, welcome. We hope we can get this through. We know it's important legislation. There's no sense in blaming the co-op folks for everything the Liberals are doing. Let's get it moving.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Nipissing has two minutes.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I want to thank the additional speakers for their thoughts.

When I spoke about the co-op in North Bay and Mr. David Lee, I basically suggested to all members that they get out of the Legislature once in a while and get into the real heart of Ontario. I would highly encourage each and every member to visit a co-op; get a better understanding. Many communities don't have co-ops. I would suggest to them that they find a riding that does have a co-op and go and visit with them. Go and visit with the families and have a better understanding.

I found, the day when I went with my wife, Patty, that we really learned a lot about the need for co-op housing. I would never have imagined that that was part of the mix. But after seeing it face to face, you have a better understanding of the importance and the role that co-op housing plays in Ontario.

We have, as I mentioned, a wide variety of housing in my particular riding, but a severe shortage of housing, which caused housing prices to spike in the city of North Bay, which then caused housing prices to spike in the

surrounding areas—Callander, East Ferris, Mattawa; all the communities in my riding. We have, as I mentioned, a need for 1,000 affordable housing units in the city of North Bay.

Nestled right in between is this beautiful housing co-op with wonderful families who take unbelievable pride in the housing. It is a spectacular site. I would hope that each member would indeed follow up on that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Chatham—

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

0920

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Thank you very much, Speaker. You were close.

It's a pleasure to rise in the House today to offer my thoughts on Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act. The act amends the Residential Tenancies Act and the Co-operative Corporations Act to move most co-op tenure dispute cases from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board. The act also streamlines the internal dispute resolution process in non-profit co-ops to clarify that hearings before the Landlord and Tenant Board and courts are determined based on the merits of the case.

Speaker, as an aside, I would like to point out that I feel like this House is duplicating efforts on a daily basis. Over and over, we are seeing bills being recycled and put through the same legislative process as they were prior to the prorogation last fall. If the government wanted to debate the same legislation, then there really was no need to prorogue this House, chain the doors closed and keep MPPs from doing what we were elected to do. If the government wanted to keep debating the same bills, it just proves that their decision to prorogue was another shortsighted, politically motivated decision.

Take, for example, Bill 65. This was legislation that was very similar to this bill, Bill 14, that we're debating here this morning. Consequently, Bill 65 died with the government's decision to prorogue Queen's Park last fall. If the government had not prorogued this House, then Bill 65 may already have been enacted into law.

If this Liberal government had not prorogued the Legislature last fall, we could be putting this time to better use, such as getting to the bottom of the politically motivated gas plant scandal or passing legislation that will help create jobs and grow our economy. Instead, we are repeating what has already been done in the past. I think the people of Ontario would be shocked and dismayed if they learned that the work we're doing now, the bills we're debating and the legislation we are passing, as in many cases, are the exact same or very similar to legislation and work we already did back in the fall.

I know that folks at home will be sure to send their heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the current member from Ottawa South, the mentor to our current Premier, and by that I'm of course referring to MPP Dalton Mc-



Guinity. Speaker, I think you can understand my frustration and my colleagues' frustration with the repetition of work as a result of the politically motivated and totally unnecessary prorogation that took place last fall.

Nonetheless, I'm happy to discuss this piece of legislation in the House as it is an important issue that needs to be addressed in the province of Ontario. The PC caucus is generally supportive of this piece of legislation. I am supportive of a more efficient system, and this legislation will help create that.

This bill will move tenure disputes from the court system to the Landlord and Tenant Board, where all other housing disputes are settled. Now, no structure is perfect, but clearly the Landlord and Tenant Board is a much more appropriate place for housing disputes to be resolved than through our court system.

Late rent payments, rent arrears, willful damage by the tenants, even interfering with other tenants, are all issues of concern that landlords face on a daily basis. It is important that there be an efficient mechanism in place to resolve these issues in a timely and effective manner.

As I am sure everyone in this House is aware, going to court can be a very costly endeavour. Seeking resolutions has cost co-op members thousands and thousands of dollars. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing estimated the cost of resolving co-op disputes in court ranges from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per case. We are looking at approximately 300 cases per year, so the annual legal cost to co-op members of the approximately 300 cases heard every year in the courts is about \$1 million annually. This act will help to reduce these costs and allow the money to be spent more wisely on behalf of the co-op.

It is also important to note that the act would directly affect the 125,000 men, women and families who live in the province's 550 non-profit housing co-ops. Speaker, you can see that instead of wasting money and resources that are better used elsewhere, referring disputes to the Landlord and Tenant Board is a more affordable and potentially more efficient option.

I'm not in agreement with everything that is contained in this bill. One thing that is a bit concerning and may result in a less efficient system is that the bill also contains an amendment to allow the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive the \$45 filing fee for some tenants. This is an aspect of Bill 14 that was not included in the original Bill 65.

It is important to note that there was no consultation and no advocacy on behalf of stakeholders or associations for this change. This was just added to the bill. It looks like it was merely an arbitrary Liberal idea. We know how these types of ideas have panned out in the past, ideas that have been dreamt up at the last minute—no real thought and, again, no consultation. Too often that is how this Liberal government chooses to govern and chooses to make decisions: last minute, on the back of a napkin, with no consultations and absolutely no planning.

Something that is even more concerning is that we don't know the cost of this decision. In a briefing, the

ministry could not reveal who will qualify for the waived fee. The concern is that it will allow for disgruntled tenants to take every minor dispute to the Landlord and Tenant Board, causing further delay in a system that is already extremely backlogged.

Speaker, you will also know that in the past, this fee was used as a cost recovery mechanism for the board's operations. This means that Ontario taxpayers and landlords will be on the hook yet again to subsidize the shortfall in revenue. This is something that will cost both landlords and tenants in the long run. It is like the Liberal government is robbing Peter to pay Paul. It doesn't work; someone always gets stuck paying the bill.

After the gas plant scandal that has cost Ontario taxpayers close to a billion dollars for a politically motivated decision to save a few Liberal seats, you would think that this government would stop dumping their debt on the people of Ontario. It is time that the McGuinity-Wynne Liberals actually solve some problems, rather than just appearing to solve problems.

Another concern that I have with the waiving of the filing fee is that it's certainly going to result in a backlog. Both landlords and tenants with legitimate concerns that need to be resolved sooner than later will be subject to long, drawn-out delays. The \$45 filing fee is completely unrelated and an unnecessary amendment to this legislation that almost defeats the purpose of the bill itself. In essence, we would be moving the cases from one backlogged court system and creating another backlogged system.

Obviously, it's disturbing that a one-sided amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Board would be considered without any consultation. It makes you wonder what the rationale behind the decision was. Landlords are certain to be upset, justifiably fearing that the door will be open for disgruntled tenants to take every minor dispute to the Landlord and Tenant Board. The \$45 fee acted as a bit of a deterrent and tended to keep disgruntled tenants from taking every issue to the Landlord and Tenant Board.

While I would like to think that the Landlord and Tenant Board is a better option for these disputes—they have the potential to be less costly and more efficient—there are some serious concerns that I have with this piece of legislation.

I will be supporting it, though, and look forward to getting to it in the committee so that we can work on some of the concerns that we've raised in this House. Since the Premier opened the debate on this bill for now the second time, I would like to urge her and her caucus to begin province-wide hearings on reform of the Landlord and Tenant Board so we can best determine, in a fair, transparent and open way for all involved, what is working and what is not.

So I will conclude that we're seeing a track record by the current government—we've seen it over the last 10 years—that there's just a real lack of consultation. Whatever the bill is, whatever decision, they make these decisions from Queen's Park without determining what effect they're going to have on the people in the province of Ontario.

With that, I'll be happy to continue the debate. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I listened intently to some of the comments that were made by the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, and I have to say that I respectfully disagree with what you were saying, especially with regard to the \$45 fee. I don't think that, by waiving a \$45 fee, the floodgates are going to open and every single person living in co-op housing is going to just have this huge onslaught on to the Landlord and Tenant Board, and say, "Ah, we've got all these problems!" I don't think that's going to happen.

I think it's a matter of respect for all people living in Ontario. I just wanted to say that. I really only wanted to stand up and say that we should move it on to committee, but it needed to be said.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?  
0930

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I say again to you: Stay here, because this party doesn't want the bill to go to committee, and when it will go to committee, they will change it. So stay here. Come to committee. The two parties, the NDP and us, we want this bill to go to committee as soon as possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's a privilege to support my colleague from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex with his stand with regard to Bill 14. Again, we're going to support this bill, but we do have some legitimate concerns with regard to this bill.

I disagree with the colleague from Rainy River—

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** Kenora-Rainy River.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** —Kenora-Rainy River; forgive me; I'm sorry—because in fact, this provision of waiving the \$45 fee opens up the opportunity whereby minimal disputes will perhaps backlog more important issues. That's all we're concerned about. There is that potential for that, okay? It's not as though they're going to come running and screaming with all little things, but there is a potential for that, all right?

Again, we do in fact like the fact that the disputes will include such things as rent arrears, late payments of rent, willful damage and illegal activity by tenants, or interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of their real property.

Again, it has been estimated that in the past, when these disputes would have to go to the courts, the cost was anywhere from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Let's get that out of the courts. Let's get it to where it can be handled more quickly and more readily, although we do know there are some disputes that are not provided under the Residential Tenancies Act, that will still have to be resolved in the courts, such things as violation of pet provisions and so on.

I see my time is almost up. Again, on behalf of the four co-ops in the wonderful riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex, we're here to support that as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to join the debate. I'll keep it brief. Obviously, we support this bill. I'll remind people that it's May 1, which means that your rent is due. Rent in this province is way too expensive, which is why we need more co-operative housing and more affordable housing. It's also International Workers' Day. Happy May 1, everyone.

We're sitting in a House where these people want chain gangs and workfare, and these folks bring in Bill 115. We've got a lot of work to do. Keep up the struggle, everyone.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex has two minutes.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Thank you very much, Speaker, and thanks to the MPP from Kenora-Rainy River, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, my colleague from Chatham-Kent-Essex, and the member from Davenport.

Speaker, the Ontario PCs supported this bill when it was introduced last year by then-Minister Wynne. However, as I said in my remarks, it fell victim to the Dalton McGuinty Liberal prorogation. The delay has actually cost co-op members potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary court costs, as the rules the bill was intended to fix remained in place during that time.

Contrary to the Premier's stated desire to work with the opposition, this new bill contains an unnecessary amendment that will open the floodgates to nuisance applications to the Landlord and Tenant Board, causing turmoil in a system that's already horrendously backlogged.

As I said in my closing remarks, the government just has to do a better job of consulting. For years, we've seen many decisions that have been made, and they just don't consult with the people of Ontario. I think that sometimes they forget where they came from. They've been in power for 10 years, and we're seeing them become more and more out of touch, whether it was the politically motivated decision to cancel a couple of power plants, one in Mississauga and one in Oakville. The people of Ontario, I know, were concerned when they opened the newspaper this morning and saw that the bill is going to be upwards of a billion dollars, just to save a few Liberal seats in the last election.

**Interjection:** It's shameful.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** It really is shameful. So again, when it comes to this bill, I just urge the government to reach out, to consult and quit wasting taxpayers' money. The people of Ontario are tired of the waste, scandal and mismanagement of the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Point of privilege.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of privilege, the member from Durham.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Davenport accused, without any motive, the Conservative Party of being in favour of chain gangs. This is labour day. I think



that's completely inappropriate and I would ask him to accept and withdraw what he said.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, I can't have him withdraw what I didn't hear. It's not really a point of order or a point of privilege, so I will rule that out of order.

Further debate?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act. I too want to welcome the members in the gallery from the co-op housing authority who are here to hear the debate this morning.

Currently, in order to deal with disputes, tenants and the boards of co-operative housing need to go through the courts, which is a time-consuming and expensive process. This bill will allow them instead to go through the Landlord and Tenant Board.

Mr. Speaker, for those who aren't aware, I want to provide a little history on this bill. It was first introduced as a private member's bill. Then the Legislature was prorogued and it died. It was reintroduced as a government bill, to die again when the Premier prorogued the Legislature last fall. Instead of spending four months waiting for the Liberals to choose a new leader, we could have been debating bills like this one. We could have been in the Legislature working for the people of Ontario, dealing with this type of bill. It's not just the time lost in the Legislature; the Premier prorogued the Legislature in the evening, with very little planning. He didn't bother to bring forward a motion to carry over bills like this, which means they had to start right over from the beginning, and that's why we're here today—just like my private member's bill, which has now passed second reading three times, but through proroguing we have to start over each time.

Mr. Speaker, our job as members of the opposition is to look at legislation and point out where the government is missing the mark, where this bill doesn't reach its intended goal, as in the case with the Local Food Act, or where it will have consequences that they haven't addressed in this bill.

We support the idea of moving the disputes at co-op housing from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board, but there is nothing in this bill that ensures these complaints will be put through the Landlord and Tenant Board in an expedient way. I often hear from constituents about concerns with the Landlord and Tenant Board. I hear that it takes too long and that they can't get disputes heard. If we add more to it and send more disputes there to be resolved, then obviously we'll have to make sure that the capabilities of the board are increased so we don't see this slowing everything down in the province. In fact, we want to make the system work better, not drag it down to not get anybody's job done. We hope that will be done, and that the government will see fit to do that to make sure we don't have the backlog that we presently have.

I've heard from numerous landlords that when they go to the Landlord and Tenant Board to evict the tenant,

they have to resign themselves to the fact that it will take at least three months. During that time, the tenants are living in the apartment rent-free. In fact, it has gotten so bad that I ran into a landlord who said he was taking matters into his own hands and was just going to change the locks because he was so frustrated with the system. I don't believe he did that, but his frustration sure was strong.

In February 2011, the Federation of Rental Housing Providers report, called *Justice Denied: Ontario's Broken Rent Dispute Process*, talked about the challenges with the Landlord and Tenant Board. The report said, "Ontario's rent dispute process is broken.... The rent dispute process in Ontario is excessively long, and is unjust to landlords." This is from that organization: "It typically takes 90 days in Ontario for a dispute to be finally resolved, and costs the landlord about \$5,200, not including administrative costs, lost time and productivity." The report also says, "That's only the typical process. If a 'professional tenant' is involved, he or she uses requests for internal board reviews and appeals to the Superior Court to add even more delays; these tenants easily use Ontario's system to bilk landlords of up to one year's rent, suffer no consequences, and cause severe financial and emotional distress for landlords." This is quoted from that report.

Mr. Speaker, we need to look at ways to make the system work better for landlords and tenants. I received an email from one landlord who said, "Landlords are only allowed to collect one month's rent deposit. But the eviction process will usually take several months for total vacancy. If the tenant opposes the eviction, asks for new hearing dates, knows how to delay the system with fraudulent claims and then simply refuses to move (forcing a sheriff to be hired at the landlord's expense), the process can take many months...."

**0940**

If the landlord is losing three months' rent whenever he goes to the board, all the other tenants—the good tenants—end up with higher rents because the landlord has to cover their costs. That's on top of all the other increased costs that result from this government's policies, like green energy, that have caused massive increases in hydro costs. This is going to be especially true in co-ops, where the tenants are landlords and will all end up contributing to the cost of delays and rents that are not paid.

This version of the bill also allows the board to waive the \$45 fee for low-income tenants. I have two concerns with that: first, that there seems to be very little detail around it, such as who would qualify as low-income; and secondly, that it may lead to nuisance complaints, which could result in further delays and increased costs for tenants and co-op members. If the tenant is successful at the board, the fee is often returned to them anyway. We need to ensure that we're providing protection for those who cannot afford the \$45, but at the same time, ensuring that people who do not fall into that category do not take advantage of the system. Both of these changes will likely lead to an increased volume of disputes coming

before a Landlord and Tenant Board that is already overburdened.

If the government is increasing the volume going to the board, the responsible thing to do would be to also make changes to the board to streamline the system to add capacity. Otherwise, we can all see that this legislation is going to lead to longer delays and is going to make the situation worse for everyone. We need the protection for both landlords and tenants. Co-op members, as owners, are both, and so I believe that ensuring they have the protection of the Landlord and Tenant Board—I believe they should have that protection to reduce the court costs.

Government members often seem to take time in this Legislature to stand up and tell members of the opposition to stop debating bills, to stop bringing forward our concerns, to stop trying to make legislation better. In the debate on the Local Food Act, government members started saying that we should shut down the debate less than a week after the opposition had their first opportunity to speak. First, I wanted to say that we will never stop trying to do our job to improve legislation to ensure that it works for the people of Ontario. Secondly, as I was reading the debates on this bill, it struck me that the reason this bill is being debated today and is not in committee is not that it has had excessive debate; it is that the government has chosen not to make it a priority in the debate. From March 20 to April 15—almost a month—this bill was not called for debate once.

As I mentioned earlier, this bill has been introduced previously by our now Premier. It was introduced on April 16, 2012, and was not brought forward to debate until October 2, 2012, almost six months later. It was debated for three days and then the Legislature was prorogued.

We heard that going through the courts instead of the Landlord and Tenant Board costs co-op members \$1 million a year. That means that they have wasted \$1 million because the government just didn't call this bill for debate last spring. To a government that can spend \$1 billion cancelling two power plants, \$1 million may not seem like much. But I can assure you that to the people in my riding who live in co-ops like Trillium Place in Woodstock and Adam Oliver in Ingersoll, \$1 million is a lot of money.

I want to thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this bill. I hope that the government will address the challenges with the Landlord and Tenant Board so that we will be able to handle the extra volume of co-op disputes and get rid of the backlog so it will work for tenants, for landlords and for all co-op housing members. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to put these few comments on—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's my honour to stand and talk to this bill. I don't want to delay it any further from it moving ahead.

I do always respect the views of everybody in this House. I'll sit here every opportunity that I have and I

will listen to both the government and to the Conservatives, because I think that's my job. Not only do I have to debate bills, I have to actually listen to the message. However, in order to move this forward, I would encourage my friends in the Conservative Party—we all have our speaking notes; we all have those. Can we not skip through those notes and just get to your local issues so I can hear exactly how this is affecting your constituents back home and I can understand that? I would appreciate that.

We're all in agreement that this is a good initiative, and we should look at moving it forward. Having said that, again I will sit in my seat, I will participate in this debate and I will do more listening than talking.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** My constituents in Ottawa Centre, especially those who live in co-op housing, want this bill to go to the committee. Let's get this to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** The words of our member from Oxford defined very clearly what the problems are, what this bill does and the solutions. I support his words completely and thank him for his thoughts on this problem.

Co-op housing provides a valuable service in the province of Ontario. We all appreciate that. There are 125,000 people who live in the 550 co-ops across Ontario. There are many co-op housing units in my riding of Carleton-Mississippi Mills.

We had a downturn in our economy about 12 years ago, when the high-tech sector took a major hit. Nortel crashed; 45,000 people across the world, and the centre of it was in my riding, lost their jobs as the company failed, not to mention the spin-off companies and spin-off jobs. Sometimes it's not very far from the top to the bottom, so some of the people who had good jobs with good incomes went to having no income, and there were no other jobs to be had. I have had people come into my office with PhDs in engineering, who worked for Nortel and other high-tech companies, looking for a job and who can't find one. These people, unfortunately, sometimes after a period of time run out of money and need the services offered by co-op housing.

This is a good bill. We support it. It makes changes to streamline the process of solving disputes and some of the other minor wrinkles that are out there in co-op non-profit housing. It's unfortunate that this government chose to prorogue last fall and derailed the whole process. This could have been done six months ago. This party will do everything we can to speed this process along. We are here to support this bill. It's a great idea. We look forward to going to committee and making the necessary changes. We're here to do the right thing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** We have 17 House sitting days left—that's assuming we don't immediately move to an election in some way, shape, or form—in which to get



this bill to a committee and back here for third reading. That's why we're not speaking to it. That's why I would appeal to my friends to the right that just blaming them for proroguing is not enough at this point; they now are stalling the bill.

Let's get on with it. Let's pass it. They're costing co-ops money. We don't want co-ops to have to pay any more money. Let's get on with it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Oxford has two minutes.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Thank you very much. I want to thank the member from Algoma-Manitoulin, the Minister of Labour, the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills and the member from Parkdale-High Park for their comments. I agree with them that we need to get this bill into committee and get the changes made that need to be made to make it a better bill and to get it back in.

As I mentioned in my remarks, the amount of money that's being spent by co-op housing today to deal with these disputes is just unacceptable. It's great for government and for us here to spend a lot of time talking about it, but the longer it takes to get it into play, the more money they will be spending.

Having said that, I think there's a very important issue that needs to be dealt with. If this bill goes through and the changes I spoke about at the landlord and tenant protection board are not dealt with—and that's not in the bill. That's something the government needs to do before this actually starts going through that process. If that's not done, it will bog the whole system down. Not only will the co-op housing movement have the same costly process to go through that they have now, but they will not be able to go through it because they will have to wait first in line for the landlord and tenant protection board to deal with the issue.

0950

So I think it's very important that we make sure that the government is listening to this debate and look at the process that they are putting the people through to make sure that it has the capacity to deal with the complaints and the challenges as they are coming forward—not to have a waiting line and in fact the whole system draws to a halt. I think that's very important, that the government is listening to this debate and that this debate is being had, and to get on with it so they can use the system that they are entitled to.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? I believe the member has spoken to this.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I don't think so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay. The member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, is a good bill and I will be supporting it.

As a caring society, we have a moral obligation to help those who need help, whether it is long-term help for people who have disabilities or short term for people

who are down on their luck. Surely in Canada, which is a compassionate society, which is a land of plenty, we can help people to get the basic necessities of food and shelter so they can live with dignity. Non-profit housing co-operatives do just that. They help people who need help. They provide affordable housing at a rental rate that matches the ability to pay.

There are many co-operative housing developments in my riding. I find them to be very attractive. They are creatively designed, well built, well maintained and well kept by residents who take pride in their homes. They fit in well with the rest of the community and are a welcome part of the community.

I suspect there is a need for even more co-operative housing as a consequence of the economic downturn of 2008 from which Ontario has never really recovered. There is high unemployment—600,000 people have no jobs; pay freezes or lack of pay increases because of the slow economy and scarce or reduced company profits; manufacturing job losses because of many plant closures; increasing cost of living caused by rapidly rising electricity costs; rising gasoline and home heating costs; rapidly rising property taxes; rising user fees and charges on services and products that consumers use every day.

The government is taxing people more and more. They are desperate for money, and they are desperately looking for more money. Where are they getting it? From the taxpayer—the taxpayer who is tapped out. They keep going back to that same well again and again and again. The government is making people poorer.

Let me give you a couple of examples of this government's desperate acts in their desperation to find more money and where they are going to get this money from—from the taxpayer, of course. In the spring of 2012, Agricorp sent letters to 4,500 farmers telling the farmers to repay the money given to them by the government in 2003—that was 10 years ago—to help them survive the mad cow disease disaster. After 10 years, they think it is okay to send a letter and say it is time to give the money back. I don't think so. Imagine the gall and indifference, the disrespect and the insensitivity. That is a sign of a truly desperate, uncaring government. This is wrong.

This spring, the government is thinking about amending the Highway Traffic Act to collect unpaid traffic fines going back up to 40 years. Can you believe it? They're once again extracting scarce dollars from the same tapped-out Ontarians—another desperate act by a desperate government. Again, it is wrong. This is morally wrong, this is morally corrupt, and, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing so disrespectful and immoral as a corrupt government. In that context, Mr. Speaker, this wonderful and historic place of governance, Queen's Park, could sadly be referred to as a den of iniquity.

The intent of the changes offered by this bill is good. The bill will move co-op tenure disputes from the court system to the Landlord and Tenant Board, where all other housing disputes are settled. The Landlord and Tenant Board is the appropriate place to resolve housing dis-

putes. These disputes will include rent arrears, late payment of rent, willful damage and illegal activity by tenants, or interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of their property.

The ministry has estimated the cost of resolving these co-op disputes in the courts at \$3,000 to \$5,000 each, and pegged the annual legal costs to co-op members of the approximately 300 cases heard every year in the courts at about \$1 million. Some disputes not provided for under the Residential Tenancies Act would still be resolved between residents and co-ops through the courts, including violation of no-pets provisions or failure of a co-op member to perform such duties as clearing snow or cutting the lawn. This act will help the 125,000 people who live in the province's 550 non-profit housing co-ops.

There are a few shortcomings in the act, and these should be addressed at committee after the bill passes second reading.

(1) It would seem reasonable to me that simple problems like no-pets violations and failure to shovel snow or cut the lawn could be more appropriately resolved at the Landlord and Tenant Board rather than go to court. Surely that common sense change could be made.

(2) I think it is unreasonable to charge a filing fee of \$45, or any amount, to a person who lives in co-op housing. People live in co-op housing because they have low income. People that have low income need all their scarce dollars for other necessities, such as groceries. It is therefore not reasonable to charge them a fee. The fee should be done away with for these tenants.

(3) Landlords' rights must be considered. Protection against nuisance complaints should be provided. Nuisance complaints could increase what is already a backlog or waiting list, to get to the Landlord and Tenant Board for resolution of disputes. Waiting a long time for a resolution of a dispute is a problem for tenants and landlords. It is important that disputes be resolved in a timely manner.

(4) Bill 14 changes the way a co-op's board of directors relates to its members, most notably how the board of directors revokes membership and occupancy rights of its members. At the moment, membership and occupancy rights may be terminated only by a majority of the board of directors of the co-operative at a meeting of that board. Bill 14 changes this provision by reducing the complexity of the process. Under Bill 14, a member of a co-op could have their membership or occupancy rights terminated by only a resolution of the board, and this resolution could be passed outside of a meeting of the board of directors. Further, as proposed, there is no appeal to this decision of the board of directors unless the board of directors has a specific bylaw that allows for appeal. This means a member of a co-op could be kicked out by a minority of board members voting by email, with no appeal of that decision. This is certainly a change, and a change that could mean that a member of a co-op who faces eviction may not have due process or a chance to defend himself or herself.

These problems can be discussed at committee. Hearings should be held—

#### *Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Rural Affairs is having a little chitchat with the gallery. We know that's unacceptable. And I notice the three members in that area are becoming very loud, so you might want to cut it back a little bit. Thank you.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I apologize, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Thanks for your co-operation.

Go ahead.

1000

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** These problems can be discussed at committee. Hearings should be held so both tenants and landlords can make presentations to committee, with their concerns and recommendations. I am sure these small problems can easily and quickly be resolved.

It is ironic that it is the prorogation by this government that stopped this bill last year, when all three parties supported it and wanted to pass it six or eight months ago. This government has prevented much of the needed changes included in this bill from being delivered to the people who have been waiting for it, who need these changes, the people who live in co-op housing. What a waste of time by this government. It is pure selfish political opportunism at its worst. What a shame. It is time to end the shame. Let's get the job done. Mr. Speaker, I support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I can't help stating what I think is the obvious. I think it's a bit rich for the Conservative Party to say that this bill could have been passed already if it weren't for prorogation—something I agree with—but then to only continually stand up and delay, delay, delay. I think it's a bit of a contradiction. I think it goes to show—the member is talking about the Agricorp program. As important as that program is, I fail to see the relevance when we are talking about co-op amendments. So I would encourage the Conservative caucus to maybe stick to the relevant parts of the debate and then to pass this along, because it sounds like all members of this House want to see this passed on. There is an opportunity for us to provide all sorts of amendments and input, and by no means does this mean that the bill in its current form will necessarily become law. I wanted to remind the members of the Progressive Conservative caucus of that. I hope that they will wrap up soon so we can pass it along.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I think the member from Kenora-Rainy River has made some very excellent points that the PC Party should take into consideration.

I also want to thank Harvey for all the good work they do. Thank you for coming out to my riding of Pickering-Scarborough East and heightening the importance of the discussion around Bill 14.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I think it's an important discussion this morning. We have stood four speakers this morning, and I think the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills has made a very passionate plea, some that was on topic.

If I look at the legislative calendar ahead of us—Mr. Speaker, it's important to put this in context—Bill 14 is a bill, but there is Bill 6, which is on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin, introduced in February, and it has never really been debated to any extent; Bill 14, of course; Bill 21, which is An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act by the Minister of Labour—a very important bill that should be debated here, and it has not been called. Bill 30 was talked about yesterday; that's the one regulating the tanning parlours. I think that bill is also one that the member from Nickel Belt has done such a marvellous job on, and the government has just copied it—plagiarism, really.

Bill 34, the Highway Traffic Act amendment, collecting for past offences—I think the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills mentioned that. Bill 36, the Local Food Act, is basically nothing. But Bill 51 is the Public Works Protection Act amending the Police Services Act. That bill is another bill by—the minister is here this morning. I think that should be called. Bill 55, the collection agencies consumer protection bill—there has been some talk about that, but really, again, if I look at the legislative calendar here, what this government should be talking about is the truth.

We'll see that tomorrow in the budget, and we'll see the NDP joining them at the hip. There's no question about it. There's a consolidated unity amongst the left wing here, and they're—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Excuse me. Have a seat. Thank you very much.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** You're using my time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Yes, I'm using your time, because you're off-topic. You have exactly—oh, sorry, your time is up.

We'll now go on to another comment: the member from Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I should have that time given back.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You might want to have a seat.

Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I think of my earlier message I was sending to my friends over at the Conservative caucus. We really need to focus on the issue. This is a good thing. We can talk our talking notes and look at them, and we can say, "There's an old barn," or "The barn is old," or we can dress it up and say, "That barn in the field in the sunset is old." We're still talking about the same barn. This is a good bill. Let's just move it forward, and let's just get to it.

I really do appreciate the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills. I did like your constructive comments

as they relate to your riding. Thank you for sharing that with us. That was really effective and good. However, I'm kind of figuring where—the points you brought up about the traffic act and what the Liberals have done and what they have not done in regard to how it relates to this bill. I appreciate the points you're trying to make, but let's try and keep it focused, and let's get this barn built so we can get the bill to the committee stage.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills has two minutes—and a little order would be nice.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I would like to thank the following members for their comments: the member from Kenora-Rainy River, the member from Pickering-Scarborough East, the member from Durham, who is always so eloquent, and the member from Algoma-Manitoulin.

We all agree this is a very worthwhile bill. It should pass. It will pass second reading; it will go to committee. We'll discuss the various little problems, which are very minor, and we'll fine-tune this and make this bill as good as we possibly can.

We need to have input from tenants and landlords about a few points, like nuisance complaints. A little thing like that could become a very big issue for certain people, so we need to address that. That's very important. We will do that at committee. We will invite landlords to come in and speak to us. We'll invite tenants' representatives or associations to come and speak to us. Harvey Cooper will always continue to advise us, I'm sure, on what the right thing to do is, and we will get there.

But one of the problems is, this government prorogued and stopped this process from happening. That's terrible. Yesterday, we were watching in committee about—we heard about this gas plant scandal, where they're wasting a billion dollars of money. It's terrible. There are people in need out there. We need more co-op housing. This government is wasting time and they're wasting money, and they are out of money. They're cutting nurses in hospitals across Ontario. They're cutting physiotherapy from seniors so that seniors won't have—this is going to fill the hospitals up with even more people.

My daughter is here today. She's a nurse in a hospital. She knows there are sick people out there. She knows there are cutbacks. It's terrible. There are cuts to Community Living. The CUPE union was in to speak to me the other day, complaining about what you're doing over there. You're cutting money out of Community Living, and it's terrible.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Mr. Speaker, I think it's just a shame we've had to go through this lengthy, unneeded process, and we'll support this bill—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. I guess we're going to further debate. The member from Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. It is a beautiful morning in the greater Toronto area. The sun is shining, and I just had a fresh bottle of milk from the

Dairy Farmers of Ontario. It was served in a glass bottle, if you can believe that. It was like stepping back in time—kind of like this bill is. It's like stepping back in time. It's like we've done this before. As a matter of fact, it was probably in late fall last year that we were debating this bill. I think it was known as Bill 65 at that time.

It's great to stand here in the House today and speak to Bill 14. This, of course, is a rehash of Bill 65 from the last session of the House. It was one of the many bills that were wiped from the order paper. As my colleague from Carleton-Mississippi Mills has mentioned many times, it was wiped out when the government decided to put the interests of the Liberal Party ahead of people who are interested in settling disputes like there are in the co-op housing industry right now.

The decision to prorogue the House and wipe the slate clean has set us back to where we were back in the fall of last year, and it was all to put the Liberal Party priorities first and to cover up gas plant scandals that continue here in the Legislature today.

So we're living through this again to make up for the fact that we have a government so mired in scandal that most of the time we spend in the House is to try and make sense of the convoluted web that the Liberals have weaved. As a result—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Ahem. Ahem.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** What word was it? I'm curious.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, I'm curious too. Maybe the member would like to stick to the agenda of the bill and not go through all the myriad of errors by the government. Thank you.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** So tempting, Mr. Speaker, but thank you very much.

As a result, most of the government bills that have been introduced this session, including Bill 14, are re-treads. They're bills that have come to us before, and we're just recycling the ideas that the McGuinty government had. That's because nothing really has actually changed on the other side of the House. It takes more than a new coat of paint to make a car new, and it takes more than a new voice to make a government new.

1010

I actually can't believe that we're here debating this again, but we will talk about Bill 14 because that's what we're here for.

There are some good measures in this bill, as the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills indicated in his 10 minutes. Moving disputes for co-op tenants to the Landlord and Tenant Board is undeniably the right move to make. That's where tenant housing disputes are supposed to be settled, at the LTB.

Now, as many of us know, there is already a logjam of cases before the Landlord and Tenant Board. What we need is a more comprehensive dispute resolution process, but that's for another bill apparently, not this one. It could have easily been included in this bill as well—a comprehensive dispute resolution process.

While we're talking about the Landlord and Tenant Board, this bill does waive the \$45 filing fee for low-

income tenants. The problem is that it also lacks definition of who qualifies as a low-income tenant. That, however, should be a change that's easy to make at the committee stage, when we get there.

The last thing we want to do is add further backlog to a system that's already backlogged. Tenant disputes need to actually be resolved, and the more complicated we make that system, the less it actually helps tenants or landlords.

The simple fact is, as we mentioned earlier, that this bill should actually already be the law. If not for the four-month prorogation in the Legislature, this bill would have already been to committee, and it already would have come back for third reading, and it would have come back for royal assent, but I digress again.

In the intervening year, while the government tried to run out the clock on the gas plant scandal and played a bit of musical chairs around the cabinet table, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been wasted by co-operative tenants trying to resolve these disputes through the court system. The more we lean on the courts to do this kind of work, the more expensive it ends up being for everybody involved. That's why we need to go to the Landlord and Tenant Board.

The member from Nipissing actually stated earlier, and many other colleagues have stated in the House when debating this bill, that the average cost of resolving these disputes in the courts is between \$3,000 and \$5,000. When we consider that around 300 co-op cases are heard every year, that's a lot of wasted economic activity being flushed down that legal sinkhole here in Ontario.

There are co-operatives all over the city of Toronto; there are a few in my riding, in the Belleville area. It's increasingly becoming a preferred tenancy option in urban Ontario. For many, the sense of community that they get from co-operative housing is an incredible benefit that's gained from a simple rental agreement, though there are many tenants who would say there's no such thing as a simple rental agreement these days. As co-operative housing increasingly becomes that preferred option, we're sure to have more need of this bill because the number of co-operative tenant disputes that go to the courts will only increase. The amount of money wasted in that system will also be increasing.

But as I stated earlier, this bill should already be law. We supported it in the last session here, and it's the intention of the PC Party to support it again at second reading in this session of this House. For any member of the Liberal Party to suggest that we're the ones who are hanging up this bill, or even for the members of the third party to indicate that we're the ones who are hanging up this bill, is rather disingenuous because of what I said earlier. This was making its way through the stages here in the Legislature. It was obviously headed toward committee, and it was obviously headed for royal assent because all three parties in the Legislature were supportive of this bill. I just can't believe that the government continues to put the blame on the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario for a decision that they made purely out



of self-interest, to prorogue the Legislature last October 15 to try and make a couple of scandals disappear.

That's the thing, Mr. Speaker: A lot of the committees that are currently operating here in the Legislature today and this week are operating in dealing with Liberal scandals. We saw it yesterday at the justice committee—hours and hours tied up dealing with a Liberal scandal; public accounts committee, same deal. It's dealing with a Liberal scandal there. We have gas plant scandals; we have the Ornge scandal; we have—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member will sit down. Thank you.

It being 10:15, this debate will resume when the order is called again for another day.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to rise to welcome the Dairy Farmers of Ontario, who are here today to update us on their industry. In the galleries are Ron Versteeg, Steve Runnalls, Henry Oosterhof, Patrick Hop-Hing, Murray Sherk, Ralph Dietrich, Wes Lane, David Murray, Norma Winters and George MacNaughton.

I hope that the members will take time to meet with them today and to come to them this evening in the legislative dining room, where they will have a reception.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome my former colleagues from Dairy Farmers of Ontario to the Legislature today. They're here lobbying for milk. In particular, I'd like to welcome Steve Runnalls from the great riding of Timiskaming—Cochrane.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd also like to welcome the dairy farmers, the board members: Ron Versteeg, Steve Runnalls, Henry Oosterhof, Patrick Hop-Hing, Murray Sherk, Ralph Dietrich, Wes Lane, David Murray, Norma Winters and George MacNaughton. Welcome, all, to the Legislature.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I'd like to welcome my daughter, Alexis MacLaren, who's in the members' gallery. She's a registered nurse at Queensway Carleton Hospital.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I'd like to introduce my constituent Mr. Michael Addario, visiting us today. Welcome, Michael.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I want to say hello to one of my constituents, Ralph Dietrich. He farms with his wife, Jayne, a Holstein operation near Mildmay, the gateway to the Bruce.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, Norma Winters, who I met with this morning, from the Dairy Farmers of Ontario—doing a great job; a strong industry, employing a lot of people in this province.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It is my pleasure this morning to in fact introduce to the Legislature Josh Varghese. He's a portfolio manager and investment analyst at CI Investments right here in Toronto. I had the pleasure of meeting not only he but also his father at a 100th birthday celebration in Chatham on the weekend, and it's my pleasure to welcome him to the House this morning.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'd like to welcome Sin Barrett to the Legislature. She's here from Ottawa, and she's the parent of one of the hardest-working legislative assistants, the talented Jennifer Barrett.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I'd like to welcome the dairy farmers here today, but particularly this afternoon, I will be meeting with them. Will Vanderhorst, of course, is a dairy farmer and a director from my riding of Peterborough. He has a wonderful operation just south of the beautiful community of Norwood, Ontario.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I know he has been introduced a couple of times this morning, but I just met with my good friend and constituent Henry Oosterhof, who's here with the dairy farmers. I just wanted to welcome him to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I also would like to welcome the Dairy Farmers of Ontario and a constituent of mine, Dave Murray. He farms near the town of Mitchell, which happens to be the host of the 100th anniversary of the International Plowing Match this year.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I would be remiss if I didn't introduce my constituent Ian Harrop, who is here with the Dairy Farmers of Ontario—a good friend of mine, and it's great to have him here today at Queen's Park as well.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** I'd like to welcome, on behalf of my honourable colleague Bas Balkissoon, the Islamic Foundation School from Scarborough. I believe he's busy trying to find them.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** We have some visitors from Sudbury and Nickel Belt this morning. I would like to introduce Rick Bertrand, who is the president of USW Local 6500, Mr. Mike Bond, Mr. Roger Lafontaine, Mr. Nick Laroche and Derek Teolis.

We also have, formerly from Sudbury but now working in Toronto, Mr. Myles Sullivan, John Stevens, Al Hedd, Mrs. Sylvia Boyce and Gerry Leblanc. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

*Interjection.*

## PUBLIC GALLERY

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay on a point of order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** On a point of order: We have in our gallery today members from the Steelworkers who are wearing essentially what is their logo on their clothing, which is USW Local 6500. They're not being allowed to wear those particular jerseys. It would be no different than my walking into the galleries as a guest wearing something that says Easter Seals or Toronto Sick Kids or whatever it might be. I would ask, Mr. Speaker,

that you allow the members of the Steelworkers to wear their clothing and not for us to turn them back and not allow them to wear what anybody else is allowed to wear in this place.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If I could have everyone's attention, please, so that I can bring clarity to this particular issue. I point out to the member on his point of order that, first, there is a standing protocol that no identification of any sort is supposed to be used in the House, and security takes it upon themselves to make that judgment.

The second thing that I think I might be hearing from the member is seeking unanimous consent for that to happen, but I would rule in favour of security's decision because that is a standing practice that they use. I will allow the member to engage in a follow-up.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'll be there with a camera taking pictures of T-shirts that say all kinds of other things, but I would ask for unanimous consent to allow the Steelworkers to wear their T-shirts in the members' lobby.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay has asked for unanimous consent in this particular case to allow the Steelworkers to wear their shirts. Agreed? Agreed.

Further introductions?

#### MEMBER FOR ALGOMA-MANITOULIN

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I would raise a point of order as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order from the member from Welland.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Last night there was a reception here in the dining room and one of the participants was choking. Our member from—

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Algoma-Manitoulin.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** —Algoma-Manitoulin actually performed the Heimlich and saved a man's life.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member for that point of order. I offer my personal congratulations and thanks, and take the moment to remind all of us that all staff are trained—most people in this place who have been elected have gone through some training of some sort throughout their life or their career—and to bring attention to the fact that you have a button that goes off in your head that says “fight” or “flight.” In this case, the member from Algoma-Manitoulin's switch went off the right way. Congratulations to the member. I thank all of our staff for being attentive to health and safety in this building.

It is now time for oral questions.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is directed to the Premier. Premier, your testimony yesterday at the gas plant

committee was highly evasive. It strained the bounds of credibility and was obviously deeply disappointing to all of us. In fact, Premier, you've lost the moral authority to govern when you conduct that kind of performance on such an important issue.

1040

One of the many items that was far from clear in your answers—I want to make sure you have a chance to answer it today: When did you first ask for a briefing from Colin Andersen of the OPA to get a full cost of the cancellations of Oakville and Mississauga, and who ordered the cover-up of information around those costs? When did you ask, Premier, for that meeting?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I did—I spent an hour and a half with the committee yesterday. I answered all the questions that were directed toward me. That was and has been part of my commitment to be open and transparent. I told the committee exactly what I knew and when I knew it. I hope that the Leader of the Opposition will check Hansard because my answers are recorded there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Again, I want to give—I know the Premier has been highly evasive on her answers with respect to the cancellation of the gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga. So I do want to give her another opportunity—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Renfrew, come to order.

Leader?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Unfortunately, true to recent form, you avoided my very simple question just now, Premier. So I'll give you another opportunity, please, to be direct with us. I would like to know exactly when you asked for a full briefing from Colin Andersen of the Ontario Power Authority, in your capacity as Premier of the province of Ontario, on one of the biggest scandals in our province. Surely, one of the first meetings you called for was a full briefing, a thorough disclosure of the costs and who ordered the cover-up. Premier, exactly when did that meeting take place?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I disagree with the language that the Leader of the Opposition is using. I don't accept the premise of his question. I said I was at the committee yesterday. I answered the question. I tabled the documents that I had received from the OPA. From the time I was in this office, I was in conversation—from the time we were sworn in—with the Minister of Energy. The information that we were receiving through the OPA, I tabled yesterday. The reason that the Leader of the Opposition is asking these questions is because I tabled those documents yesterday. I brought them to the committee; I made them available.

The OPA estimates were different from what we had previously been told. In fact, yesterday there was another number. The information was different again. That's why



it was very important that the Auditor General write his report. That's why I asked the Auditor General to write his report, and I believe that it's important we wait for that report.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, your leader wants to put the supplementary question. Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Again, Premier, respectfully, you're not answering a very simple question. It seems to me that the very basic first meeting you'd ask for, as a new Premier, would be to sit down immediately with Colin Andersen of the Ontario Power Authority and ask him for the full costing of the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants, and ask him who ordered the cover-up. This seems to me fundamental.

Yesterday, in committee, you did say you didn't know—"We didn't know." But respectfully, Premier, it's your job to actually know—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It's your job to know the facts.

Premier, you wanted the job. You campaigned for the job. You asked for the job. I ask you, respectfully, why aren't you doing the job?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm very much—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm very much looking forward to the opposition leader's testimony about his costing. I'd like to know what his thoughts are about what they expected the costs to be. I look forward to that. I don't know exactly when he's going to appear before committee, but I've been there. I told the committee what I knew. The reality is that the numbers kept changing and keep changing. That is the reality. That's why we need to wait for the Auditor General's report.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Unfortunately, I did not get an answer on if the Premier did have a briefing from Colin Andersen, and—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Social Services, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —why she was woefully negligent—to the Premier, Speaker—in not addressing that as one of your first meetings. I would think that would be the basics of the job. Yesterday, you were supposed to clear the air; you left a lot more questions unanswered.

Speaker, I didn't get an answer to my first question of why the Premier was woefully neglectful in her duties as Premier to get to the bottom of that. Respectfully, it is

your duty, Premier, to know those answers, not try to cover them up.

There was another important distinction there at committee. Colin Andersen basically said yesterday, in the morning, that everybody knew the cost of the gas plant. You say that's not true. A very basic question: Who is telling the truth—you or Colin Andersen? Who is telling the truth, Premier?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

The leader is—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Energy, come to order, please.

The leader is using language that is tightrope-walking in terms of some of the things he said, so I'm just going to give him a caution now, that if it's—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I need everyone's attention.

I would ask the leader to be cautious of that type of language.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is that the complexity of calculating the costs of the relocation of these plants has meant that the costs keep changing in terms of the information that I received from the OPA. I had briefings with energy officials. From the time I came into this office, I was dedicated to making sure that we had a process that was going to open up the opportunity for the members of the opposition and the third party to ask the questions that they needed to ask. I made it very clear that I was going to appear before committee. I have done everything that I could since I came into this office to make sure that the process was opened up.

The reality is that the calculation of the numbers has changed. The information that we have gotten has changed, and it changed as recently as yesterday morning. I tabled documents that made it clear that at one point there was one number and there was a different number yesterday. That's why we need to wait for the Auditor General's report, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker, and I appreciate it. I am trying to walk that line. It is a difficult balance, but I think you understand the seriousness of this issue and that the credibility of the Premier of the province of Ontario is at stake.

Premier, now you say that the numbers kept changing. I think you're basically saying that you never asked for a briefing to get finality on those numbers. You decided to look the other way or you knew and you refused to tell us. Either way, that undermines our ability to put confidence in you to lead this province of Ontario.

You stood here in the Legislature and publicly said the costs were \$40 million, and all the while you knew the costs were far in excess of that \$40 million. If you're willing to say something that you know was not in keep-

ing with the facts, why should we have any faith in you to be honest to the taxpayers of Ontario when you, yourself, were involved in covering up this scandal over the cancellation—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Now I will ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the contention, the assertion of the Leader of the Opposition, is simply not true. I appeared at committee yesterday. I talked about the cabinet meetings that I had attended. I talked about the information that I was given. I made it clear that the information that I was given changed, Mr. Speaker. The numbers changed. The OPA appeared at committee yesterday and made it very clear that the numbers had changed, and the information they had—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please.

Please finish.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The OPA made it clear that the numbers that had been given to us were not the same numbers that they were bringing forward yesterday. There is nobody in this Legislature who wants the information clearly on the table—nobody wants that more than I do, which is why I've done what I've done for the last number of weeks. I will continue to do that work no matter what the Leader of the Opposition says.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Willful blindness.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Respectfully, Premier, ignorance is no excuse; willful blindness is no excuse. You are the Premier of the province of Ontario. You have the ability and you have the responsibility to compel an answer. It should have been one of your first meetings. Quite frankly, you say the numbers changed—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:**—your answers changed—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General, come to order.

1050

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I think, quite frankly, Speaker, that means it's time for a change in the province of Ontario to get us down an entirely different path.

Premier, your answers today, and your answers at committee yesterday, were highly evasive. They strain the bounds of credibility. Quite frankly, you've lost the moral authority to govern.

I will ask you respectfully to put before the Legislature a confidence vote when it comes to the Liberals continuing to put their interests ahead of taxpayers'. Will you call that confidence measure for a vote today?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I answered the questions yesterday. Now I'm looking forward to a very large confidence issue coming before this House, and that would be the budget. We are focused on youth unemployment. We're focused on investing in roads and bridges—infrastructure around the province. We're focusing on a fairer and more prosperous Ontario. We're focusing on investing in the music industry. Those are the issues that will come before us. That will be the confidence issue that we discuss. I sincerely hope that the opposition members read the budget, that they determine whether they want to support that budget based on the merits of the budget, because I believe that those issues touch the people of Ontario every single day. That's what we're going to focus on.

## POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Would the Premier agree that our job here as elected members is to put the public interest—the needs of the people who elected us—ahead of the interests of well-connected insiders or the political interests of our parties?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Absolutely, and I would suggest that everything I've done as an elected official—and certainly everything that I've done in this office as Premier—has been directed at making sure that we do act in the best interests of the people of Ontario. That's what government exists to do. That is why we have government: to act in the collective interest, the best interests, of the people of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Jeez, even spending \$10 billion on gas plants to save Liberal seats? That doesn't sound like the public interest to me. That sounds like the Liberal interest, Speaker.

Yesterday in the committee hearings, the Premier admitted that as a cabinet minister she herself signed off on the cabinet decisions scrapping the private power deal in Oakville without asking any questions at all about the cost. As co-chair of the Liberal campaign, the Premier didn't even ask any questions about the cost of cancelling the private power deal in Mississauga.

Why didn't the Premier ask a single question on behalf of the people who would be stuck paying the massive bills for those decisions?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I answered these questions yesterday at committee. The reality is that the relocation of these plants was the subject of a negotiation. I was a member of a cabinet that was implementing that decision that the third party and the opposition had agreed needed to happen. We were implementing that; there was a negotiation. The reality is that those numbers were not available. We did not discuss the specifics of the negotiation that was happening at the table. I would expect that the leader of the third party



would understand how negotiation works, and that it actually needs to be a confidential process. Not every member of the cabinet had access to those specific numbers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** What I understand is, regardless of what happens in a negotiation, people have an estimate—a ballpark idea—of what they're going to have to spend when something like this gets decided. During the election campaign, I was asked whether I would commit to scrapping those plants, and I wanted to. I wanted to, since the Liberal government's decision to sign that private power deal in the first place was the wrong decision. But I would not make that commitment because the government refused to make the documents public. They refused to make the contracts public, and we have been asking for those contracts time and time again. I didn't know the cost, and the Premier had the same opportunity as I did to ask for the costs. She decided not to ask any questions at all, but to simply do whatever her party said she should do.

Why can't she admit this was the wrong decision?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of the third party is intent on having it both ways. She suggests that she would not have cancelled the gas plant contingent on the costs, but we heard in committee yesterday that her candidates were out saying that they would cancel the gas plant. So I'm sorry; that high ground has been ceded a long time ago. She cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is all parties said that they were going to cancel the gas plants. That was the position that everyone took. We implemented that decision, and I was quite clear that I regret that there were public dollars that had to be spent in the way that they had to be spent. But the reality is we made that commitment, we listened to the people of Mississauga and to the people of Oakville, and we made good on the decision that was agreed to by all parties in this House.

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I find it quite disconcerting that the Premier of this province doesn't know the difference between a candidate and a leader. I don't know how they run their campaigns, but in our campaigns, it's what the leader says that everybody else follows.

My next question is to the Premier as well, Speaker. In tough economic times, these issues—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. Stop the clock. Order, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. Order, please. Okay, so let's start mentioning individual ridings.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You really aren't helping. Please. Thank you.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The question is for the Premier. In tough economic times, it's these very issues that matter and they matter a great deal. People are worried in these times as well about falling further and further behind. Now, the Premier tells everybody in this province that the cupboard is bare, and she's telling families that they're going to have to be paying more—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize for the interruption. Please stop the clock. The Minister of Community and Social Services will come to order, and the member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've got the seats memorized, thank you very much—Deputy Speaker. Thank you.

Leader.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Yet the government is moving ahead with a new corporate tax loophole worth \$1.3 billion a year while public sector CEOs' salaries are climbing everywhere from the OLG to hospitals. When is the Premier going to see that this is the wrong direction, and it's people that should be coming first?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm just going to draw a line between a comment that the leader made before she asked that question to say that I'm part of a team. That's how I work. The difference between candidates and leaders, for me: Leadership is about working with candidates, working with all of the members of the team, and being on the same page and understanding exactly what it is we stand for as a collectivity. We are part of a team.

So I believe that when the candidates who thought they were part of the NDP team were talking about cancelling the gas plant, they thought that that was the position, Mr. Speaker. We know that the people of Oakville and the people of Mississauga understood that that was the position of the NDP. We made good on that promise.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I don't believe it's my final.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, sorry; I apologize. I was quite excited, so I forgot to check it off.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, I guess the people will decide what kind of leadership they want in this province. I think the people want leadership that takes responsibility for their team and actually provides the lead, which is what we do in the New Democratic Party.

But you know what? The Premier had a chance to ask questions about the gas plant costs, and she didn't ask a single question about something that was going to cost the public over a billion dollars, or almost a billion dollars. I don't know what she has to say to the people of this province, because she certainly didn't say it yesterday in committee.

People are struggling right now. They're worried about their jobs; they're worried about health care; they're worried about the cost of everyday life—and today they see in the paper that their government once

again gave away more than half a billion dollars to make a political problem disappear for them. Now they are planning to ask them, those very people, for more and more money when they're already having a strained budget.

1100

Does the Premier think it's fair that a government spends billions of dollars on CEO salaries increasing, on corporate tax loopholes and on cancelled gas plants while asking people to pay more?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just make that connection I said I was going to make about being a team and we're all in this together. The reality is that the budget that we will table tomorrow speaks to the needs of the people of the province. It speaks to the needs of making sure that we have a fiscally responsible budget in place, and at the same time that we invest in the things that we know are going to make people's lives better. That means making sure that home care is in place, making those investments; making sure that the infrastructure that's necessary for economic growth in small and rural communities, the roads and the bridges, are dealt with, because I know that municipalities struggle with that; making sure that young people have access to placements, to co-ops, so that they can find their way into the workforce.

Those are the concerns. I understand that. I know that the leader of the third party agrees that those are issues we should be focused on. That's what will be in our budget.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement-ary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** New Democrats have been very clear: Now is not the time to be opening up a brand new, \$1.3-billion tax loophole so that corporations don't have to pay their HST. We've been clear as well: These are tough times, and we shouldn't be making it tougher for families by asking them to pay more while corporations pay less.

My question to the Premier is: Will Thursday's budget close the brand new \$1.3-billion corporate tax loophole or will we see the same old status quo that leaves people falling further and further behind?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the Minister of Finance has answered that question many times, in the sense that he's working with the federal government, there is a federal government component and responsibility to this, and we are working to close some of the loopholes. What the leader of the third party is talking about is not exactly a loophole; it's a constraint of the tax regime. But the reality is that he's working on that.

Underneath her question is an issue around building transit for people in the GTHA. The reality is, we believe that it's very important that we have a plan to build that transit going forward. We don't have another 40 years to wait, and the single moms who are trying to get their kids to school and trying to get to work don't have time to wait either. We need to get on that, and I would expect that the third party would be right with us, and the member for Trinity-Spadina leading that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** This morning my question is for the Premier. Premier, yesterday at the justice committee we had sworn testimony from the Ontario Power Authority's CEO, Colin Andersen, that "everybody" in the government knew that the cost of the Oakville gas plant cancellation was more than \$40 million. Despite you and your entire government clinging to the \$40-million number all these months, you finally admitted to the justice committee that you knew the cancellation indeed was much more. What you didn't tell the committee is when you knew. Is the reason because you and others have stood there in this Legislature time and time again telling us one thing when you knew something else to be true? Is that why, Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I have in my hand a memorandum of understanding dated September 24, 2012. The same day that this memorandum was dated, it was posted on the website of the Ontario Power Authority. I find it absolutely appalling that that critic did not read this document. Not only that; he did not read the 261-page contract that sets out the arrangement between TransCanada and the province on this particular issue.

It's very, very clear from this document that there are sunk costs. That number is identified. There's a range of other items, savings as well as additional costs, that are included in this document. So the whole world knew, including him, if he had read this document, that there were other costs and savings that had to be calculated in the Oakville plant. Disgraceful.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Prince Edward—Hastings will come to order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton—oops, I mean the member from Lambton—Kent—Middlesex will come to order.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. Perhaps a page could send a glass of water over to the minister. His face is almost as red today as the Premier's was all day yesterday during the testimony.

Premier, we've now seen that your government will say anything to stay in power. You continue to say one thing when the opposite is true. Mississauga cancellation is \$180 million? Nope, it's \$275 million. Oakville is \$40 million? Nope—oops, it's \$310 million. You said you didn't know anything, but it's your signature, Premier, on the cabinet documents that started this whole process. You're all over this, Premier, and by not telling us when you knew what you knew, you've shown us you're part of this scandal. Why should we ever trust anything you say again?

*Interjections.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.  
Minister?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I think the official name for the Tories is Don Quixote tilting at windmills.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member for Simcoe–Grey, come to order.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** He's tilting at windmills because he refused to read the document. He refused to read the document that identifies that there will be future costs and savings at the Oakville plant. He continues to say that Colin Andersen said that everybody knew. I agree with Colin Andersen. Everybody knew. The only reason he doesn't know is that he did not read the document that says there will be additional costs, additional savings, that need to be calculated.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Member from Durham, come to order. I believe that's the second time.

Carry on, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** As a result of this document, they've been trying to calculate the cost. Yesterday Mr. Andersen went before the committee, and he came with two different costs. Four weeks ago, he had a different cost. That's why we need—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Sit down, please.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, people want to look to Queen's Park and see some leadership. Instead, this is what they see: They see a Premier who says that she never even spoke with Dalton McGuinty about gas plants. They see a Liberal government writing blank cheques to cancel private power deals because you ripped up contracts without any idea of how much it would cost. They see a Premier who has known for months that the cost of cancelling gas plants was not \$40 million and not \$180 million but who knew full well that there were more costs coming and didn't bother to tell the families who are going to pay the bill. These are more examples of the new government being exactly the same as the old government. Premier, is this the sort of leadership Ontarians should be expecting from this new government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm still reeling a little bit by the admission by the leader of the New Democratic Party that even though her candidates said they would cancel, they didn't really mean it. I wonder if the member can tell us what he's going to tell Frank Clegg, the chairman for Citizens for Clean Air, who told the committee, "Well, we met with all the parties and all the candidates

and were given commitments by every candidate in the Oakville area that they would support cancelling the plant."

We have Greg Rohn of the Coalition of Homeowners for Intelligent Power. He said yes, "The NDP were against the plant...." He went on to say, "The NDP came in and attended our rally." The mayor of Oakville, Rob Burton: "Our citizens organized their own effort to ask the province to re-think the proposed power plant.... They won promises from all parties to stop the proposed power plant."

I could go on with the candidates, with the commitments from the New Democratic Party to cancel both plants. Perhaps the honourable member could explain.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Back to the Premier: Leadership means making tough decisions, and it also means being honest, not continuing to keep Ontarians in the dark despite having months to correct the record. It means taking responsibility, not trying to blame the other guy when you've done exactly the same thing.

I know the Premier keeps saying her government is new, so why does this Premier's leadership look exactly the same as the last Premier's leadership?

1110

**Hon. John Milloy:** You know, I can go on here. I think the member's question about leadership proves the point here. Hazel McCallion came before the committee, and you know what she said? She said, "The impression that was certainly given beyond a doubt ... I think all parties would have cancelled it; there's no question about it." So I think she'll be quite surprised to learn of the leader's statement today.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, you can go right to the source here. Etobicoke–Lakeshore, according to *Torstar News Service*, September 16, 2011: "Etobicoke–Lakeshore NDP candidate Dionne Coley also pledged to fight the plant."

In the *National Post*, September 29, 2011: "... local NDP candidate, Anju Sikka, soon issued statements concurring with the new Liberal cancellation."

Even the member from Toronto–Danforth told *InsideToronto.com*, "We wouldn't build it."

Mr. Speaker, we saw today all of them right under the bus.

## DOCTORS

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. It was 182 years ago today, on May 1, that Emily Stowe was born in Norwich, Ontario. Dr. Stowe went on to become the first female physician in Canada. To mark this date and to acknowledge the extraordinary service our doctors provide, we recognize May 1 as Doctors' Day.

Doctors play a vital role in keeping everyone healthy. My constituents in Ajax–Pickering want to be assured that they have access to a family doctor when they need

one. Can the minister tell us what the government is doing to increase our doctors in Ontario?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thanks to the member from Ajax–Pickering for this very important question. I'd also like to acknowledge the member from Richmond Hill. He successfully introduced the motion to recognize May 1 as Doctors' Day back in 2011. But most importantly, I want to say thank you to all of Ontario's doctors. They work so hard every day for Ontario patients.

We have made significant progress in recruiting new doctors right across the province. Today, we have 4,000 more doctors practising in Ontario than we did in 2003. In Ajax and Pickering, it's a 40% increase: 190 new doctors practising in Ajax–Pickering. We're training more doctors, we've increased the number of residency spots for international medical graduates, and more doctors are going to underserved areas. Health Care Connect is working to connect patients who need doctors to doctors and, thankfully, 93% of us now have a family doctor.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Thank you, Minister. Speaker, this is not only good news for my constituents but for all Ontarians. Having access to a family physician is important to everyone, but that's just one part of ensuring equitable access to primary health care. Not all of my constituents are easily available to visit a doctor's office, or might have to see a specialist who practises in a location that might not be very close to their home.

Can the minister please let us know what we are doing to ensure that each and every Ontarian has access to a doctor despite any challenges that they might face?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The member raises a very important point, and we're working hard to make sure that every Ontarian has access to primary care.

We made a commitment to Ontario diabetics. We said, "If you want a doctor or a nurse practitioner, you're going to get one." We've kept that commitment. Now we're saying to Ontario seniors, "We're going to make sure you get attached to primary care."

Back in December of last year, we worked with the Ontario Medical Association with a new agreement. That includes 30,000 more house calls for doctors. It includes after-hours care so people can get access to the care they need when they need it. Our agreement was all about improving quality of care for patients, and I'm very pleased that it received overwhelming support from Ontario's doctors.

We've increased the number of telemedicine visits and virtual visits more than tenfold since 2003, and we're going to continue to work with Ontario doctors to make sure patients get the right care, the right place, the right time.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, it's obvious that disclosing all you knew about your gas plant scandals is not part of your plan. In spite of the fact that seven witnesses, including OPA CEO

Colin Andersen, have said that you and all of your cabinet knew all along that the cost of Oakville would be more than \$40 million, you still refuse to reveal when you knew that.

You claim that as a member of cabinet, you didn't know. You claim that as a meeting chair when the Oakville MOU was discussed, you didn't know. You claim that as Liberal campaign vice-chair, you didn't know—and then, as Premier, that you never knew that the cost far exceeded \$40 million.

Premier, your claim is hard to accept. It's time for the Legislature to decide. Will you call our want of confidence motion—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —or will you continue to refuse because you know your record—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** What's hard to accept is the double standard that exists here. The Premier of the province appeared in front of the committee yesterday and answered all the questions that were directed to her. She appeared, Mr. Speaker, as soon as she was invited.

Let me tell you about the Progressive Conservative Party, which has yet to release any of its costing for the plants before the election, despite the YouTube videos, tweets and press conferences. We asked the Leader of the Opposition to be there yesterday. He refused, and now he's looking at his schedule—maybe the 7th, maybe the 14th.

But you know what? We have asked three Progressive Conservative candidates to appear in front of the committee. One has outright refused, one was coming to the committee and then suddenly decided she couldn't, and another one is still thinking about it.

I ask the honourable member in his supplementary to explain to us when Progressive Conservative Party candidates will be coming forward and talking about their costing of these plants in the last election.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** When might you be inviting those candidates to your cabinet meeting?

Premier, you just aren't getting it. The Ontario Power Authority has given their best guess of what the Oakville plant cancellation and relocation will cost, and it is 775% higher than the number you and your colleagues have repeatedly claimed.

Yesterday, you had the opportunity to make a statement and to testify for 90 minutes about your version of the events. Premier, you failed to make your case. Your government's record has been laid bare. The members of this assembly are not buying what you're selling and I am certain that the people of Ontario aren't buying it either.



If you actually believe that you've done nothing wrong and deserve the confidence of this House, then call our want of confidence motion for debate and let this House decide.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to the member's question and I failed to hear any indication of what the Progressive Conservative numbers were or about the presence of the candidates or the testimony of the Leader of the Opposition.

These are not political games, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition made this a cornerstone—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Both sides are not being helpful.

Finish, please.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, this was a cornerstone of their campaign. They had tweets. They had news releases. They had media interviews, and the Leader of the Opposition appeared—he starred—in a YouTube video. They sent out thousands of robocalls. I do not think it's unreasonable that we would like to hear from the candidate who made those robocalls. I do not think it's unreasonable that we'd want to hear from the candidate who put out this pamphlet saying, "The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party." Yet they evade the questions about their costing. They evade the presence of their candidates.

When will they come forward to the committee—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## WORKPLACE SAFETY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Nearly two years ago, Jordan Fram and Jason Chenier were buried in a run-of-muck accident at the Sudbury Stobie mine. Their families are still waiting for answers about why they died in a preventable accident.

When will the Premier do the right thing and call a public inquiry into this tragedy so that no more lives are lost on the job?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.

1120

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the leader of the third party for the question on a very important issue. It's always very tragic when we hear about the loss of a worker. In the case of the tragedy that took place two years ago, it was tragic as well. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines and I had a chance to meet just last week with Wendy Fram, the mother of the person who passed away in that accident.

Of course, we need to continue to do more to ensure that we make our workplaces, especially mines, safe. I've committed, along with Minister Gravelle, to Wendy Fram that we will work with her to ensure that we are taking

steps that no other son or daughter is lost in a mining accident in our province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, last weekend I stood with Sudbury workers and their families to mark the Day of Mourning here in Ontario. Many of those Steelworkers are here with us today in the spectators' gallery.

The miners who earn their living underground in this province deserve peace of mind, and their families deserve peace of mind. The families of Jordan Fram and Jason Chenier deserve answers, as do the families of the other nine miners who have lost their lives over the last five years, and in fact the person who was killed yesterday in a mining accident about 50 kilometres outside of Wawa.

Will the Premier give these people what they need and call a public inquiry into the deaths at the Stobie mine and the safety of the mining industry altogether, an industry which has changed rapidly over the last number of years and yet has not been reviewed for upgrades to its health and safety legislation for over 30 years?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Sympathies to the family of the worker who passed away just outside Wawa as well. I had the chance to speak with the member from Algoma-Manitoulin about that incident as well and assured him that I will work along with him and my ministry to ensure that we get all the answers.

In the case of the Stobie mine, a criminal trial date has been announced in October. There's also going to be a mandatory coroner's inquest in that instance. The Ministry of Labour is also involved in about four different health and safety blitzes dealing with the mining sector on very specific issues. One just finished, and there will be three more coming up through the summer and early next year.

We're also working through the Mining Legislative Review Committee, which is part of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. We are looking at options as to how we can work with the co-chairs of that committee and find ways to make our mining even safer.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Consumer Services. Today in Ontario, more than 80% of our citizens use some form of mobile device, and most of them have entered into some kind of contract with a provider.

In my own riding of York South-Weston, we are experiencing many issues with regard to cellphones. I would say that the most concerning is probably that of students being robbed of cellphones. But the other major source of complaints is about contracts. People are very confused about the language in contracts, about additional charges and massive cancellation fees. I think we've all experienced that.

Minister, I'm happy to learn that you introduced legislation to address this very issue. Speaker, through you to the minister: I would like to ask the minister to share with

us why she has chosen to take action now instead of waiting for the CRTC to develop the code of conduct.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member for York South–Weston for a very important question. I'm very pleased to rise to talk about the new Wireless Services Agreement Act. I also want to thank the Minister of Natural Resources, the MPP for Sault Ste. Marie, for showing strong leadership on this issue from the very beginning.

We all know that there has been an explosion in the use of wireless communication devices in this province. Unfortunately, there has also been an explosion of complaints and issues around that. In fact, a recent CRTC hearing commissioner for complaints noted that there has been a 250% increase in complaints over the past four years—a very significant number.

My ministry, the Ministry of Consumer Services, has received 740 calls and complaints in just the last year. So there is need for clear action, and the bill will give Ontarians the protection they're looking for.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Minister, I'm astonished to hear the number of complaints. I'm not entirely surprised, because cellphones are one of the most widely used consumer products, with a large, complicated contract attached to them. It's not entirely surprising to hear the number of complaints. Most consumers realize that they already have the Consumer Protection Act in place to protect them from unethical practices. But with the complex web of problems that consumers encounter with their wireless services, there needs to be dedicated legislation to specifically address this issue.

Speaker, through you to the minister, can she please explain to this House how the proposed act will be providing more transparency and fairness to consumers?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I'm very pleased to talk about the strong action our government's taking to help consumers in Ontario. This legislation has five major components.

First, it provides clarity. Contracts will have to be disclosed in plain, easy-to-understand language.

Second, it will require consumers to provide consent prior to any changes being made to current contracts.

Third, it will include a maximum cap of \$50 on cancellation fees.

Fourth, the bill will require service providers to include all-inclusive pricing predominantly on their ads.

Fifth, if you are improperly billed and the provider refuses to pay, consumers will have the right for triple recovery of the amount owed.

Additionally, Speaker, the bill will require service providers to stop billing immediately once the device is reported lost or stolen.

These measures are very strong and protect and empower consumers in Ontario.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Frank Klees:** My question is to the Premier. Four years ago, the then Attorney General and the most recent

Minister of Energy tabled in this House a very prophetic bill. It was passed by this House, and the Premier voted for it. It was Bill 108, entitled An Act respecting apologies. "Apology" is defined in this act as "an expression of sympathy or regret, a statement that a person is sorry or any other words or actions indicating contrition or commiseration...."

I'd like to ask the Premier, after an hour and a half of admitting her responsibility for signing documents for spending some \$858 million of taxpayers' money on a deal to save Liberal seats, will the Premier stand up and issue an apology to the people—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** If the member for Newmarket–Aurora checks Hansard from yesterday and from this House, he will see that I have many times said that I regret—which is one of the words, one of synonyms used to define an apology. I have said, over and over again, that I regret that this situation happened. I regret that we did not have a better process in place, Mr. Speaker. I regret that the costs were not clear. I regret that public dollars had to be spent in this way in order to relocate these gas plants. And it must not happen again. We must have a better process going forward. One of the things I said yesterday repeatedly was that I hope the justice committee, having heard all of the witnesses, is going to be able to help and give some advice on how, going forward, we can avoid this situation ever happening again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, \$585 million was used to save Liberal seats. The Premier admitted that it was a decision by the Liberal Party of Ontario. The Premier admitted that she signed the cabinet document to spend those funds. What we cannot, and what people in this province cannot, understand is why the Premier cannot stand in her place, reach deep down and say to the people of Ontario, "I am sorry for what I did, for what our government did and for what our party did." Why can the Premier not stand up and utter those words? What is keeping her from making that apology to the people of Ontario? I ask the Premier one more time.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I understand the passion that motivates the member opposite, Mr. Speaker. I said, yesterday, throughout the hour and a half that I was at the committee, that I was as frustrated as they were. We all agreed that—

1130

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. The Minister of the Environment is not helpful when he continues to heckle while the answer is being put. It's not helpful.

Please?



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We all agreed that these decisions should be made. We implemented the decision. Everyone wanted to see that decision implemented because that's what they talked about during the campaign. That was their position. We made that decision. We entered into a negotiation. I have said repeatedly that I regret a better decision wasn't made upfront and that we need to make sure this doesn't happen again.

Since I came into this office, I have done everything in my power to make sure everyone had the information they were asking for.

#### ELGIN-MIDDLESEX DETENTION CENTRE

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. On Monday, a man who fired gunshots at his former manager and terrified a London neighbourhood was sentenced to seven years. However, he will serve less than half his sentence. The appalling conditions of the jail were cited by the judge as a reason for reducing his sentence.

Is the minister okay with convicted criminals being prematurely released due to the terrible conditions at this jail?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** We respect the right of judges to impose sentences that they deem appropriate under the law. We are aware of the concern regarding EMDC. With the administration of the jail, we have developed a 12-point plan, and we are working on the improvement of that jail. I've also suggested what will be implemented: It's to have kind of a board of directors for that jail comprised of citizens in the community to help us to redress the situation at the EMDC.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** The conditions at Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre have long been deplorable. Workers have told this government that they were at risk, and so was their ability to properly do their job. Now we're seeing that these conditions are resulting in reduced sentences for convicted criminals.

Why hasn't the minister taken this issue seriously enough to prevent this kind of fiasco from happening in our correctional system?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** As I said in the past, the situation in the EMDC jail is our top priority. Both my office and the Ministry of Correctional Services have been following the situation. The deputy minister and the assistant deputy minister have been there many times. We've changed the administration at the jail—all of this to try to improve the situation.

I take the concern very seriously. That's why I went myself to visit the jail, and make sure we have a plan to redress the situation.

#### HEALTHY SCHOOLS

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Education. A great education enables our young people

to succeed later in life. Our government has increased our investments in the education system by 45% since 2003. As a result, we have seen tremendous progress in student achievement. For example, graduation rates have increased by 15 percentage points since 2003. However, we also know that in order for students to do well in school, they need to be healthy students.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can you please inform the House what you're doing to make our schools a healthy place to learn?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough—Agincourt for her advocacy on behalf of healthy schools.

We know that a healthy student is an active learner. That's why our government is committed to creating an environment in our schools where healthy choices are the easiest choices students can make. Our school food and beverage policy sets nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold in schools so that our students have access to good-quality food. I'd like to thank the Dairy Farmers of Ontario, who are here this morning, for their participation in milk programs in many of our elementary schools.

We've also set out a comprehensive healthy schools strategy which includes daily phys ed, funding for all our boards to have mental health leaders, support for mental health nurses in our schools and a healthy school framework to assist schools.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Our schools are not just places to learn but are also community hubs. They're places where our students gather before and after school or on weekends, to learn and to play. This is quite evident in many of my schools in Scarborough—Agincourt.

In one of my visits to Dr. Norman Bethune Collegiate, the principal had to get on the PA system to remind the students that it was now 5 p.m. and students needed to vacate the school buildings unless they were involved in extracurricular activities.

Making our schools accessible for community programs is a great way to get our students to be more active. Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Can you please inform this House of the work you're doing to make our schools more accessible to the community?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Our government has made schools more accessible to the community, because the member from Scarborough—Agincourt is absolutely correct that what happens after school is important in the lives of students too.

This school year we're providing \$42 million through our Community Use of Schools program. This funding supports healthy, active lifestyles by enabling not-for-profit groups to offer affordable activities to our young people. As part of our Community Use of Schools program, we are providing \$7.5 million to help provide free access to school space outside of school hours in communities that need it most. Through our work, 220 priority schools offer school space at no charge to not-for-profit groups. We will continue to work with local schools to serve as community hubs.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier's testimony yesterday wasn't just evasive; it was downright suspect. When asked repeatedly about when she first learned of the so-called buckets of costs, the Premier ducked and dodged, attempting to avoid accountability.

While the weak-kneed Liberal apologists in the NDP may be willing to turn a blind eye, the PC caucus will hold this scandal-plagued government to account. So I ask the Premier this: Will she finally uphold her moral obligation and call the PC want of confidence motion for a vote?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's review the Premier's actions in this regard. She was the one that came to office as Premier and asked the Auditor General to look into the Oakville situation. She's the one that called for a select committee of this Legislature, which was rejected by the opposition. She was the one who asked the government members to put forward a motion for a government-wide search for relevant documents. It was voted down by the opposition. It was the Premier who went before committee yesterday and spent an hour and a half answering questions that were posed by the Progressive Conservatives.

There's a quote that I'd like to share with everyone from Oakville Mayor Rob Burton. He said the following: "Anyone who wishes to criticize the cost of cancelling it would do everybody a favour if they would explain how they would have done it differently."

I couldn't put it better than Mayor Burton.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Again to the Premier: That was a pathetic response. That response might be, in fact, enough to satisfy the weak and feeble members of the NDP's Toronto caucus, but taxpayers in my riding expect better. Instead of busying themselves capitulating to NDP extortion, the Liberals should be focused on getting to the truth of the gas plant—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I withdraw.

They should be focused on getting to the truth of the gas plant scandal. But it's clear this government is determined to play games. This one is hide-and-seek. You hide the real cost of the gas plant scandals and force the opposition to seek out the truth, and the truth we're finally getting hurts.

Premier, you have lost the moral authority to govern, but my question is, do you have the moral fibre to call the PC confidence motion today?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, the honourable member talks about games. I'd like to just inform everyone that I've just received a note: The justice committee will not be sitting tomorrow. There's a reason why, Mr. Speaker. Because the list of witnesses were all former

Conservative candidates, and not a single one is going to show up—not a single one is going to show up and discuss the costing, the analysis that was done by the Progressive Conservative Party about the promises that they made at the door, in media, through news releases, in the Twittersphere, on YouTube, through robocalls, and why their leader stood up and said "Done, done, done." They were available that way to stand beside the leader, but they're not available tomorrow to answer some questions of the justice committee.

## FERRY SERVICE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** My question is to the Premier. The Chi-Cheemaun ferry is a crucial link between Tobermory and South Baymouth on Manitoulin Island—crucial to businesses, tourists and students. It contributes \$25 million a year to local economies and transports over 200,000 passengers a year. It's supposed to open up for the summer on Friday, but it won't because the Ontario government and the federal government refuse to take responsibility for dock repairs needed to address low water levels.

The Owen Sound Transportation Company has been raising concerns about the threat of low water levels for over a year. The cost of repairs is less than \$300,000, and the benefits are in the tens of millions. When will the Ontario government stop trying to find ways to avoid its shared responsibility for the ferry and start playing a constructive role in getting the ferry running now before local economies and businesses are devastated?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** This is a very serious situation, certainly one that we are determined to find a solution to. I appreciate the question.

The fact is the current low water levels of Lake Huron are putting the Chi-Cheemaun ferry in a position where it cannot safely dock at the wharves. The work that needs to get done is immediate work.

The wharves are owned and operated by Transport Canada. We have a legal agreement with them for them to maintain that. I had a discussion yesterday with the federal minister, who is, at this stage, not prepared to do that. We're going to keep the pressure on and make sure that happens.

But let me say this if I may, Mr. Speaker: We recognize the importance in terms of tourism and the economy. We are prepared to find a solution. The work needs to get done, and I am determined to see that that work does get done so the Chi-Cheemaun can operate as soon as possible.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay on a point of order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Just for the record, the reason the committee is not meeting tomorrow, according to the Clerk—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's not a point of order.



## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On behalf of the member from Willowdale, guests: mother Fe Pe and aunt Diane Pe are here to observe Karinna Pe. We welcome them to the House.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1143 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Introduction of guests? Introduction of guests?

I'll introduce one of my own. From my riding of Brant, the big shot of the Dairy Farmers—I think that's the nicest way to say it—Bill Emmott is here. He's some kind of grand pooh-bah. We are glad you're here. Thank you for joining us, Bill. The chocolate milk tastes wonderful.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## DAIRY FARMERS OF ONTARIO

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I rise today to recognize the Dairy Farmers of Ontario. I was pleased to talk with them today with our leader, Tim Hudak, and have the opportunity to reiterate our commitment to supply management.

We recognize that Ontario's dairy industry supports 75,000 jobs across the province and contributes \$5 billion to Ontario's GDP. They are a vital part of not only our rural economy, but also our food manufacturing sector. I am proud that Oxford produces more milk than any other county.

I want to commend the Dairy Farmers for the work that they are doing to bring milk into our schools through the volunteer-run school milk program and through World School Milk Day. Unlike our now Minister of Agriculture who tried to ban and restrict milk and chocolate milk in schools, we understand the benefit of giving our students access to fresh, nutritious milk. It is a local food, and we on this side of the House are proud to support milk in schools.

Rather than banning foods, we believe the best approach is to work with groups like the Dairy Farmers to increase the food knowledge among our students. That's why earlier this week we announced that we will be introducing an amendment to the Local Food Act to require food education in the curriculum in all grades. I hope that all parties will support that amendment.

I want to thank the Dairy Farmers of Ontario for coming to Queen's Park to update us on their industry. I also want to thank them for providing Ontarians with safe, high-quality, Ontario milk.

Mr. Speaker, in my introductions this morning, I did forget the chair of the Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Bill

Emmott. Following you, I wish to introduce him to the Legislature and welcome him.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** One too many.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** This morning, my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin asked for action to keep the ferry going between Manitoulin Island and Tobermory. This vital link faces a shutdown because lake levels are dropping, which in turn causes huge docking problems—ones that can shut down the ferry.

Although there are a number of factors that affect water levels in each of the Great Lakes, climate change is the biggest single factor in driving down water levels. Higher evaporation in summer, lack of ice cover and thus evaporation in winter all mean loss of huge volumes of water. Climate studies cited by the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States show a future loss in average water level in the Great Lakes from half a metre to two metres.

The cost, the destruction of habitat and the disruption of people's lives will be immense. The need to rebuild infrastructure so that the ferry can keep going will be only one of the many costs that will come from a world that is heating up.

Speaker, the Liberals' response to climate change has been underwhelming. The government needs to act.

## DOCTORS' DAY

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I have the privilege and honour, in the presence of Premier Wynne, to recognize an extraordinary group of men and women serving the province of Ontario. That is, of course, Ontario's medical doctors.

May 1, as you may know, Speaker, has been declared Doctors' Day in Ontario. I would salute the MPP for Richmond Hill, the Honourable Reza Moridi, currently our Minister of Research and Innovation, for bringing this forward. It was his private member's bill in 2011 that proclaimed this.

Why did we choose May 1 as Doctors' Day? Are we expressing solidarity with any other labour groups across the world? Perhaps, but it's also the birthday of Dr. Emily Stowe, the first female physician in the province of Ontario. As a physician parliamentarian myself as well as a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion—when it existed, of course—I'm proud to be part of a world-class health care system that we have established right here in Ontario.

I think of the many, many numbers that I can cite for you, Speaker; whether it's the 400,000 patients who see MDs across Ontario, the 4,000 more physicians that we have across the province, more residency programs, more opportunities for international graduates or the fact that 93% of Ontarians have access now to a family doctor, we can see that the government salutes and recognizes the physician contribution. That's what Doctors' Day is all about.

## BLACKBERRY

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Today I would like to congratulate BlackBerry on the release of its latest smart phone. The Q10, with its highly anticipated keyboard and touch screen, hit store shelves today.

The launch of the Q10, along with BlackBerry's Z10 and a new operating system earlier this year, demonstrates the vibrancy of Waterloo region's tech sector, which continues to create good, high-paying jobs by driving innovation forward in Ontario, Canada and the world.

As a key company in mobile communications, BlackBerry continues to lead the sector in new directions while playing a pivotal role in Waterloo region's economy, which is home to hundreds of technology companies. I'm glad to see this iconic company has taken a major step forward by introducing another sophisticated smart phone to build on the success of its new BB10 operating system, which includes a number of new features.

One of my favourites is the BlackBerry Messenger video chat application. I use this app every night I'm away from home here in Toronto to talk to my family and to watch my young son Murphy laugh and play.

Now, I love my Z10, but I encourage those you who still enjoy having a keyboard to go out and buy the Q10 today. Again, I would like to congratulate BlackBerry on its latest addition to its smart phone lineup and continuing to develop world-class devices to work and play.

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** After almost a year and a half of spearheading the fight against rising auto insurance rates in Ontario, I've learned that this issue is not only a main concern for constituents in my riding, but a major concern for drivers across Ontario. That's why our party has made reducing auto insurance rates by 15% one of our major demands in the upcoming budget.

After questions asked in this House, after a motion passed, the NDP plan to ensure auto insurance rates by 15% has finally been listened to by this government, and yesterday the government announced that they would be implementing our strategy.

But we've all heard Liberal promises before, and I'm very concerned about some hidden conditions in this promise. So what we'd like to see is the upcoming budget. We're going to be very careful to make sure that this is in writing, that there are some guarantees and, very importantly, that the reduction by 15% is within a year, because drivers in Ontario deserve nothing less.

The evidence is very clear. We've seen billions of dollars of savings passed on to insurance companies. It's time to pass some of those savings on to drivers. That's why we, the NDP, are going to make sure that this government is held to account, that they follow through with their promise and that they actually work to implement the NDP plan to reduce auto insurance rates by 15%.

## JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Last night, we kicked off Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario at the Lipa Green Centre with guest speaker Dr. Irving Abella. As you know, last year, with the help of the member from Thornhill and the member from Parkdale-High Park, we unanimously passed Jewish Heritage Month here in Queen's Park.

Jewish Heritage Month provides an opportunity to celebrate and learn about the incredible contributions that Jewish Ontarians have made to communities across the province, from Kenora to Cornwall to Brantford. Ontario has been home to a thriving Jewish community since the 1880s. Despite hardships and incredible obstacles, the community has been a vital part of Ontario's growth and has made significant contributions to a number of sectors, including the arts, human rights, business, academia, building, construction, law and medicine.

Today, Ontario is home to more than 200,000 Jews, the largest Jewish population in Canada. I urge all Ontarians to explore the many Jewish Heritage Month events and exhibits, so that we can celebrate the history of the Jewish community in Ontario and ensure that their sacrifices and successes are not forgotten by future generations.

## 1510

Mazel tov, Mr. Speaker. I encourage everyone in this Legislature to do something Jewish in their riding and celebrate this great community that has helped build this great province.

## ALGONQUIN REGIMENT

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'm very proud to stand today to speak about the Algonquin Regiment, headquartered in North Bay. As their honorary lieutenant colonel for many years, I'd like to speak a little bit about our proud history.

The Algonquin Regiment was founded July 1, 1900, but its independent companies can trace the official heritage back to 1863 and the Fenian raids of 1866. Our unit has earned 28 battle honours during its existence, and many of our soldiers continue to come from the north's mining, logging and hunting communities. We also have eight affiliated cadet corps spanning northern Ontario.

In World War I, several hundred of our soldiers went overseas with the 48th Highlanders of Toronto. At the outset of World War II, the majority of our soldiers were mobilized with the Grey and Simcoe Foresters. All of them exemplified our motto, Ne-kah-Ne-tah—We Lead, Others Follow. Two soldiers in our regiment were recipients of the Victoria Cross: Sergeant William Merrifield and Sergeant Aubrey Cosens. Our regiment is honoured in several communities in Holland and in northern Ontario street names, parks and schools. Regimental memorials are located in several canal cities of Holland and in Parry Sound, New Liskeard and North Bay.

I'm truly honoured to be able to represent the Algonquin Regiment here in the Legislature today, and I look forward to reading their petition regarding the regiment in a few moments.



## SENIORS' CLUBS

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Speaker, I'm proud today to rise and recognize the hard work and dedication of those individuals working in seniors' clubs in my riding of Vaughan.

Seniors' clubs are an extremely important part of my community. Not only do they offer programming and resources for seniors and for their families, but they are also a key player in ensuring that our seniors continue to live safe, healthy and active lives.

I would like to take a moment to specifically recognize a number of Vaughan seniors' clubs as well as their presidents. These include the East Woodbridge Seniors' Club, and they're under the leadership of Dominic Losito; the West Woodbridge Seniors' Club, under Michele Saraceni; the Maple Italo Bocce Club, and Luciano Esposito; the Maple Pioneer Italian Seniors' Club, and Maria-Eva Cristante—I look forward to being with the Maple Pioneer seniors' club later tonight as they deal with the Seniors Association of Vaughan Initiative volunteer recognition awards; the Pine York Seniors' Club, and Isabella Ferrara—Isabella happens to be the president of SAVI; the Sonoma Heights Seniors' Club, under the leadership of Lina Tolone; and the Vellore Village Seniors' Club, under the leadership of Giuseppe Perricone.

Each of these clubs provides, as I mentioned, activities, services and outreach to seniors in Vaughan. Most importantly, each of them is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life and the physical, mental, and social well-being of our seniors. Their hard work is truly a testament to the character of those living in Vaughan, and I am happy to have been given the opportunity to recognize them today here in the House.

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, this week the Premier and four other cabinet ministers announced that in tomorrow's budget they will try to tackle the issue of Ontario's high youth unemployment. I might emphasize "try." Their solution is to throw more money at the problem, but there is a better solution. Instead of spending more money on funds, grants, investment programs and subsidies, I believe we need to tackle the root causes.

Economists know why young people have a high unemployment rate. Our inflexible labour legislation makes it difficult to hire workers, especially young workers. Countless studies have shown that laws like mandatory unionism and card-based certification make it difficult for young people to crack into today's over-regulated labour market. Barriers like the College of Trades, high journeyman-to-apprentice ratios and closed tendering only compound the difficulty our youngest have in getting into the higher-paying jobs in the skilled trades.

That's not fair to the youth in this province, and they deserve better. That's why this afternoon, on May Day, I will be tabling three bills that will genuinely tackle the root causes of Ontario's youth unemployment and our employment crisis in this province.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr8, An Act respecting The Beechwood Cemetery Company.

Bill Pr13, An Act to amalgamate The Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton, The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London, in Ontario, The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of Peterborough in Ontario and Sisters of St. Joseph for the Diocese of Pembroke in Canada.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MARSH & CO. HOSPITALITY  
REALTY INC. ACT, 2013

Ms. Jaczek moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr10, An Act to revive Marsh & Co. Hospitality Realty Inc.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

DEFENDING EMPLOYEES'  
RIGHTS ACT (CERTIFICATION  
OF TRADE UNIONS), 2013LOI DE 2013 SUR LA DÉFENSE  
DES DROITS DES EMPLOYÉS  
(ACCREDITATION DES SYNDICATS)

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 62, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 to increase the rights of members of trade unions with respect to the certification of trade unions / Projet de loi 62, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail pour accroître les droits des membres des syndicats relativement à l'accréditation des syndicats.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Very short, Speaker: This bill amends the Labour Relations Act, 1995, to prohibit the Ontario Labour Relations Board from certifying a trade union as a bargaining agent of the employees in a bargaining unit unless a representation vote is held among the employees.

LABOUR RELATIONS  
AMENDMENT ACT (ONTARIO LABOUR  
RELATIONS BOARD), 2013

LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL  
(COMMISSION DES RELATIONS  
DE TRAVAIL DE L'ONTARIO)

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 63, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to the Ontario Labour Relations Board and other matters / Projet de loi 63, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail en ce qui concerne la Commission des relations de travail de l'Ontario et d'autres questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

1520

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** This bill amends the Labour Relations Act, 1995, to remove the stated purposes of the act. The practice and procedure of the OLRB is no longer determined by rules made by the board but will be determined by regulations made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under this act.

At present, the party affected by a decision of the OLRB has no right of appeal. The bill provides the right of appeal to the Divisional Court in accordance with the rules of the court. It also makes members of the board and other officers compellable witnesses in an appeal or upon a judicial review of the board's proceedings, and makes the Minister of Labour and other ministry officials compellable witnesses before a court or tribunal.

DEFENDING EMPLOYEES' RIGHTS ACT  
(COLLECTIVE BARGAINING  
AND FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE  
BY TRADE UNIONS), 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR LA DÉFENSE  
DES DROITS DES EMPLOYÉS  
(NÉGOCIATION COLLECTIVE  
ET DIVULGATION

DES RENSEIGNEMENTS FINANCIERS  
PAR LES SYNDICATS)

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 64, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 to protect the rights of employees in collective bargaining and the financial interests of members of trade

unions / Projet de loi 64, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail pour protéger les droits des employés à la négociation collective et les intérêts financiers des membres des syndicats.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I will paraphrase the explanatory note because it is a little bit lengthy. This bill has a number of key elements to it. The first is that it provides and compels trade unions to provide yearly financial statements on all expenditures of \$5,000 or more and to make that information publicly available to both the ministry and on websites. It also allows and creates the option for members to opt out of a union, but on doing so, if they opt out of the union, they also must opt out of the collective bargaining unit so that there cannot be any free-rider provisions for people who choose to opt out of the union.

It also prevents a union from collecting dues for purposes other than for collective bargaining purposes, and allows that the employer is not compelled to take dues off members for purposes other than collective bargaining purposes.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE  
AND FOOD

MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE  
ET DE L'ALIMENTATION

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to recognize the 125th anniversary of Ontario's Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the oldest ministry in the Ontario government.

J'ai le plaisir de prendre la parole aujourd'hui pour souligner le 125<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation de l'Ontario, le plus ancien ministère du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

The Ontario of 1888 was very different from our province today. It was new, with borders still being finalized, and if you look at the picture on the wall—and I actually look at the picture of the 1888 Parliament quite frequently; that's the year my grandmother Eva Crummer was born—if you look at that picture, it does not look anything like the makeup of the Parliament today. Oliver Mowat was in the midst of his 24-year term as Ontario's Premier, during which he extended suffrage, created the municipal level of government and introduced liquor regulation laws. Ontario's primary industry was agriculture, with twice as many people living in rural areas as there were in cities.

The support we now provide to our agri-food industry ranges from promoting Ontario food domestically and internationally, to ensuring food safety, to partnering in



research and innovation. But one very important thing has not changed: Agriculture remains a major driver of Ontario's economy.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Some \$34 billion.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just as in 1888, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food is committed to supporting our farmers and food processors. Today, Ontario's agri-food industry is stronger than ever, contributing \$34 billion to the economy, as my parliamentary assistant said here, and supporting 700,000 jobs. Our primary agriculture sector is the largest in Canada, producing more than 200 different commodities, and our food processing sector is the second-largest manufacturing sector in the province.

While it is certainly true that our agri-food industry is big, it could be bigger, Mr. Speaker. As Minister of Agriculture and Food, I'm committed to working to grow this industry. We'll do this by focusing on three key goals: first, making Ontario a better place to do business; secondly, increasing competitiveness through innovation and; thirdly, supporting a local food strategy that will support jobs and investment by growing our markets here at home and across the globe.

Je tiens, en tant que ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation, à stimuler sa croissance. Nous le ferons en nous concentrant sur trois objectifs clés : (1) faire de l'Ontario un meilleur endroit où faire des affaires; (2) accroître la compétitivité par l'innovation; et (3) appuyer une stratégie pour les produits alimentaires locaux qui soutiendra les emplois et les investissements en faisant croître nos marchés ici et partout dans le monde.

For over a century, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food has worked hand in hand with Ontario's farmers and agribusinesses to ensure the success and prosperity of our agri-food industry.

As we look back on our achievements, we must also recognize the hard work of the men and women who make up our agri-food industry. They have built the strong foundation for this success. They keep our families nourished and healthy, they form the backbone of so many communities across our province and they are instrumental in Ontario's success.

Ils gardent nos familles bien nourries et en bonne santé. Ils constituent l'ossature de très nombreuses collectivités un peu partout dans la province et ils jouent un rôle clé dans le succès de l'Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I know that we will continue to work together with our agri-food partners in the years to come to build on our successes and to share all the good things that grow in Ontario with families here at home and all over the world. Merci beaucoup. Thank you.

SEXUAL ASSAULT  
PREVENTION MONTH  
MOIS DE LA PRÉVENTION  
DE L'AGRESSION SEXUELLE

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I stand today to recognize May as Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Ontario.

En ce moment, je veux dire clairement que la violence à caractère sexuel, sous n'importe quelle forme, n'est pas acceptable et ne sera pas tolérée dans cette province. Chaque femme a le droit d'être et de se sentir en sécurité chez elle, dans sa communauté et sur son lieu de travail.

Mr. Speaker, let me repeat: Sexual violence in any form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in this province. Every woman has the right to be safe and to feel safe in her home, her community and her workplace.

But we recognize that there is still more work to be done in Ontario in this respect. We've all heard the statistics. It is estimated that one in three Canadian women will experience sexual assault, yet sexual violence is a subject that is seldom discussed until high-profile devastating stories move us all to action.

Reading and learning of these tragic realities reminds us that sexual violence does have devastating consequences. The extensive media coverage shows us that men and women of all ages recognize sexual violence to be a serious and pervasive problem. It also reminds us that more discussion and more action are needed to prevent and ultimately eradicate sexual violence.

Le Mois de la prévention de l'agression sexuelle nous donne une occasion d'avoir ces conversations et de prendre des mesures. En changeant les attitudes, on peut changer les vies. L'éducation constitue la première étape.

**1530**  
Sexual Assault Prevention Month gives us a chance to have these conversations and to take action. By changing attitudes, we can change lives. The first step is education. We need to provide children with the skills and attitudes to build healthy, equal and respectful relationships to prevent sexual violence; to build a society where boys and girls and men and women have the knowledge to identify and speak out when they see these incidents occurring; where the word "consent" is fully understood by our young people to mean something that is asked for and given, not implied; and where victims have the confidence to receive the support they need and to report crimes when they occur.

Nous sommes déterminés à promouvoir cette éducation. C'est pourquoi notre gouvernement appuie les campagnes sur le Web de la Campagne du ruban blanc et du Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions. L'initiative « It starts with you. It stays with him. » — « Ça commence avec toi. Ça reste avec lui. » — fournit aux enseignantes et aux enseignants des plans de leçons pour la promotion des relations saines et égalitaires, ainsi que sur la prévention de la violence.

We are committed to promoting this education. That's why our government supports Web campaigns like the White Ribbon Campaign and the Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions.

The "It Starts with You. It Stays with Him" and « Ça commence avec toi. Ça reste avec lui. » initiative provides elementary and secondary teachers with lesson plans on promoting healthy, equal relationships and preventing violence.

Two years have passed since we launched our Sexual Violence Action Plan to prevent sexual violence, im-

prove supports for survivors, and strengthen our criminal justice response.

We are making progress in achieving these goals. Research shows us, however, that 15% to 25% of college- and university-aged women will experience some form of sexual assault during their academic careers, so that's why we've created a resource guide to help universities and colleges prevent sexual violence on their campus. The guide provides practical tools and offers advice on how to engage the entire campus community in making our campuses safer.

We've also expanded the language interpreter services program, which delivers interpreter services in over 60 languages for victims whose first language is neither English nor French.

Avec moins d'une victime sur 10 qui signale des agressions à caractère sexuel à la police, nous savons que nous devons améliorer la confiance des victimes pour qu'elles osent parler, en augmentant le soutien que nous leur fournissons. C'est pourquoi nous augmentons notre investissement pour améliorer les soutiens aux personnes survivantes par l'intermédiaire des centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel partout dans la province.

With less than one in 10 victims reporting sexual assaults to the police, we know we need to improve victims' confidence to speak out by increasing the support we provide them. That's why we're increasing our investments to improve supports for survivors through sexual assault centres across the province, and we continue on a path that I believe will lead us to achieving our goal.

I want to thank all of those who work on the front lines every single day. Throughout Ontario, we can all be a force to bring about change. Let us not stand still. Let us not be silent. Let us reiterate that sexual violence in any form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in Ontario.

As I have said, changing attitudes will change lives, and by speaking up against sexual violence, we will make Ontario a safer, fairer society for all women.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is time for responses.

#### MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I'm pleased to recognize the Ministry of Agriculture's 125th anniversary. To start, I want to recognize the OMAFRA staff. I've had the opportunity to work with some, and they are truly experts in their field and I want to commend them.

I also want to recognize another significant milestone in the ministry's history. On May 18, 1966, it became the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. If food hadn't been forgotten in February, this month we would have been celebrating 47 straight years of agriculture and food.

This year, we could also be celebrating 15 years of the successful Slots at Racetracks Program to help the horse

racetrack sector. Instead, we are watching the demise of the industry.

May has another milestone. Based on the responses to our survey, May 10 is red-tape-freedom day for food processors. That means, if we put it all together, food processors would have spent until next Friday just dealing with government forms and paperwork.

Over 125 years, Ontario agriculture has evolved. Today it is advanced, high tech and scientific, but the ministry and the government haven't kept pace.

When we ask farmers, agribusinesses and food processors about the challenges they face, too often the response was: challenges created by this government. We heard that they are drowning in red tape. Businesses are choosing not to expand—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Attorney General.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** —and create new jobs because with all the excess paperwork and regulations, they don't think it's worth it. We've heard from farmers, food processors and agribusiness that the massive hydro increases caused by the Green Energy Act and government policies are having a significant impact. We heard from farmers who can't get a fair AgriStability appeal even though they paid the premiums and followed the rules.

Recently, I received over 300 emails about the massive increases to the eco fees for agricultural tires and the negative impact it will have on our agriculture industry and our tire dealers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize one more milestone.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think your colleague wants you to listen.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** For 15 years we have celebrated Ontario Agriculture Week right before Thanksgiving. Now this government is proposing to replace it. We believe in celebrating our farmers and all of their contributions to the land, the economy, the community—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

The member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell will withdraw.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Withdraw, Speaker.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** From his chair.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll take care of that part. And now he'll stop.

Carry on.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** We believe in celebrating our farmers and all their contributions to the land, the economy and the community as well as producing the food we eat and, in the case of the dairy farmers who are here today, the milk we drink. We will be putting forward Local Food Act amendments to save Ontario Agriculture Week, add food literacy and strengthen the agriculture and food industry to give us more to celebrate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Because I believe in the precepts of this place and the way in which we operate, I'm going to ask the member



from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell to go to his seat and withdraw.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I usually look at my afternoons to be a little on the softer side.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew will come to order.

The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock for a response.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to rise today to mark Sexual Assault Prevention Month. Sexual violence has a destructive and devastating impact on the lives of victims, their families and the well-being of society as a whole. It is an issue that crosses all social, economic and cultural boundaries and affects men and women of every age. We use this month to increase awareness of sexual assault and focus our efforts on eliminating it in all of its forms.

The problem remains daunting. Statistics show that nine out of 10 sexual assaults are not reported to the police. Myths surrounding sexual assault are still common in our society and tend to shift blame onto the victim and raise doubts about the credibility of their testimony. Victims often suffer in silence without support. As a result, there is a particular need to have services that are available, accessible and safe for victims of sexual assault.

In my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, agencies such as the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, the YWCA in Haliburton and Peterborough and the Peterborough Regional Health Centre Sexual Assault Response Team are doing important work in addressing this issue. These organizations provide immediate and confidential services for victims and survivors of abuse. Through the services provided by organizations like these, victims can overcome the guilt, anger and shame that many still experience, and begin to feel empowered, stronger and hopeful about their future.

Our ultimate goal must be to stop sexual violence before it begins and start conversations on how to prevent it happening. When Sexual Assault Prevention Month ends, the discussion doesn't need to.

I commend the many groups and workers who are working tirelessly to spread awareness and prevent sexual assault. They and the victims they support should know that their Legislature stands behind them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good response.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION MONTH

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Every year at this time, at this month, I stand and I say the same thing, and every year this government refuses to act.

1540

Let me tell you what I'm talking about when it comes to Sexual Assault Prevention Month. Victim Services Toronto is the only agency in Toronto providing immediate assistance to victims. It runs 24 hours, seven days a week, and it has not had a cost-of-living increase for two decades—two decades, Mr. Speaker. The government of Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan does not include one cent for victim services in Toronto, and the funding per victim for the Victim Crisis Response Program has dropped from \$286 in 1990 to \$31 two years ago, \$31 per victim—the only agency. So I would really question the true motives of the spin of this month from this government if they can't even fund the only agency that's actually helping victims directly 24 hours a day in Toronto.

That's the bad news. The good news: Some folk are doing something. On May 10, just before Mother's Day, faith leaders from across this province and across the city are coming to Queen's Park, 1 o'clock, and they are going to sign on to a statement. This is the statement: "We, the leaders in our respective faith communities, stand committed to promoting freedom from violence for all women."

This is a critical action by our faith leaders, and I'm talking about faith leaders from all the great faiths who are coming here. It's not the first time. Every year, Ruth's Daughters of Canada inspires faith leaders and gets faith leaders to come and to sign on yet again, to get our congregations active around this issue.

So there are folk doing something. There are folk doing something directly that affects people's lives directly. We just wish this government would fund victim services, please. This is, I think, the fifth year I've said exactly the same thing with exactly, unfortunately, the same results.

## MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

## MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE ET DE L'ALIMENTATION

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's once again an honour to rise on behalf of Andrea Horwath and the New Democratic caucus in order to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. It's a particular honour for me because my family has been involved in agriculture since my parents emigrated from Holland many years ago.

Speaker, the more things change, the more they stay the same: 125 years ago, agriculture was the biggest economic driver in the province, employing more people than any other sector.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes. And it was absolutely deserving of a dedicated ministry, the oldest ministry in the province—absolutely.

Today, 125 years later, the agriculture sector is once again the biggest economic driver in the province,

creating over 700,000 jobs and adding over \$30 billion to Ontario's economy annually.

We are honoured here today to have the leaders of the dairy sector here. The dairy sector creates 75,000 jobs in the province and adds over \$5 billion to the economy.

Urban Ontario seems to have discovered agriculture, and they all seem quite surprised how big it is. Yet those of us who have always been involved, we know, and we just smile quietly. We go and do our work feeding the province and feeding the world.

The Ministry of Agriculture kind of mirrored that. They are helping the people, helping farmers get better at their craft.

Dans la campagne, le personnel du ministère a joué un rôle crucial pour faire avancer le secteur. Ils ont été conseillers en cultures, conseillers financiers et, dans certaines parties, des traducteurs de la province. Quand mes parents ont déménagé à Temiskaming, c'était le représentant de l'agriculture qui a traduit les informations locales du français en anglais—and then my mom to my dad in Dutch.

Le personnel du ministère a joué un rôle essentiel sur les routes de la concession de la province, et dans les zones assez chanceuses de les avoir, ils le font encore.

We used to all have ag reps. We don't have them anymore. The one thing the ministry has lost is that the ministry talks to farmers; it doesn't talk with them, and it doesn't speak for them. That's the one thing, and that's why, oops, we no longer—Agriculture Week has been supplanted, and that's wrong. Our caucus will commit to talk with farmers and not talk at them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the current policies of the McGuinty/Wynne ... government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I totally agree with this petition. I affix my signature, and I'll send it to the desk with Chedi.

## MINING INDUSTRY

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this very heavy load today, and that's because over 5,000 people from all over Ontario have signed this petition. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas there has not been an inquiry into mining practices in Ontario for 30 years;

"Whereas there were eight deaths in Ontario mining properties since January 2011;

"Whereas mining technology has significantly changed how mines operate in Ontario;

"Whereas ownership of the mining sector has become international;

"Whereas environmental issues have been identified in workplace diseases in community health from mining operations;

"We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to commission an inquiry into the state of mining in Ontario and into the Ministry of Labour's enforcement of the Ontario Health and Safety Act and regulation 854, that is the regulation for mining. Such an inquiry will reinforce best practices and identify issues for improvement."

People from all over Ontario signed this petition, so will I, and I will send it with page Gabriel and, I hope, some of his strongest friends to bring it to the Clerk.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** "Whereas the Ontario government's ongoing investment in the RVHS Ajax and Pickering hospital has created an outstanding community health care delivery system; and

"Whereas the Rouge Valley Health System Ajax-Pickering hospital's 10-year vision plan (as read in the Legislature by MPP Dickson) will be instrumental in ensuring the ongoing needs of the increasing population are met;

"Therefore we undersign this petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and ask that the government of Ontario continue to invest in this family-friendly Ajax-Pickering hospital."

I attach my name to it, Mr. Speaker, and hand it to Brigid.

## SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I met today with representatives from the Guelph Wellington Community Living association; they gave me this petition, and I wanted to present it today. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with



disabilities like cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism; and

"Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs with a developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

"Whereas today over 30% of the developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

"Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

"Whereas in some cases client services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a 'custodial' care arrangement; and

"Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

"Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential care and day program supports province-wide;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have been cut;

1550

"(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

"(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce."

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

#### CASINOS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the proposed waterfront casino does not take into consideration the wishes of the public, who have time and again rejected the building of a casino in Toronto;

"Whereas the redevelopment of the port lands in Toronto would not benefit from the imposition of a casino;

"Whereas an urban casino will draw most of its visitors from locals, not tourists, therefore benefiting operators of the casino and provincial government coffers at the expense of Torontonians; and

"Whereas a casino will have adverse effects on Toronto, fracturing families and communities, jeopardizing small businesses, causing long-term job loss and intensifying social problems;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly do all in its power to stop a casino being forced on the city of Toronto."

I agree with this petition. I'll sign it and give it to page Megan.

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I have a petition here to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It reads:

"Whereas the agri-food industry is now, and has historically been, one of the primary economic drivers in Ontario; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario support local processors and producers in Ontario through purchasing and consuming locally grown and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and processed food products; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario farmers and Ontario food producers by leading by example; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario celebrates local Ontario producers and processors and promotes the good things grown, harvested and made in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 36, the Local Food Act."

I support this wholeheartedly, will sign it and send it down with Kelly.

#### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here about "Stop the tire fee increases."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

"Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

"Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

"Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

"Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs."

I thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition, and I affix my signature.

## SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** “Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with disabilities like cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism; and

“Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs with a developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

“Whereas today over 30% of the developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

“Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

“Whereas in some cases client services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a ‘custodial’ care arrangement; and

“Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

“Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential care and day program supports province-wide;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have been cut;

“(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

“(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce.”

I couldn’t agree more. I’m going to give it to Megan to be delivered to the table and sign my name.

## ALGONQUIN MEMORIAL BEACH

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We, the undersigned, support the proposal to request the city of North Bay to dedicate the beach and adjacent land in honour of the veterans of the Algonquin unit who have served and given their lives for their country. This city-owned property is currently used as a beach by local residents but is considered underutilized due to lack of public awareness, parking and by lack of clear definition of the property. The location is ideally located near the

22 wing, and is easily accessible to both the rural and urban population of North Bay....

“The property currently has both forest and a beach that can be accessed by following a path. Ideally, a site plan would include signage, a designated walkway, public parking, washrooms and change rooms. The property is approximately seven acres.

“We support the designation and development of the city of North Bay’s Springdale property on Four Mile Lake to be dedicated as the Algonquin Memorial Beach for recreational use including a public beach.”

I sign my name and give it to page Simon.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Re: Dr. Kevin Smith’s Niagara Health System report to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care proposed changes to the hospital services in south Niagara.

“Whereas the residents of south Niagara will not have equal, fair, safe and timely access to in-patient gynecological, obstetrical and pediatric services due to distance; and

“Whereas excessive travel times and lack of public transportation for residents in south Niagara will put patient safety at risk; and

“Whereas if implemented, Dr. Smith’s recommendations and the proposed location of a new south Niagara hospital in Niagara Falls is approved, a two-tier health system in Niagara will be created, where north Niagara will be overserved and south Niagara will be underserved in relation to the safe and timely access to health and hospital care; and

“Whereas if hospital services including in-patient gynecological and mental health, and all obstetrical and pediatric services from the Welland hospital site and the Greater Niagara hospital site will be relocated to the new north Niagara St. Catharines site in 2013, it will undermine the continued viability of these two sites as full-service hospital sites;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to maintain existing services at the Welland hospital site and the Niagara Falls hospital site and that no services are to be moved until this new south Niagara hospital is open and request that any approval for a new Niagara south hospital include a site that is centrally located in Welland.”

I’ll affix my signature and send the petition with page Brendan.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and



"Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

"Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

"Whereas the latest policies from the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers."

I will sign this petition.

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas a want of confidence motion has been tabled before the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and  
1600

"Whereas the government of Ontario remains in power only while it has the confidence of the assembly; and

"Whereas the debate of a want of confidence motion requires the consent of all three parties' House leaders; and

"Whereas the recent scandals, including the Ornge air ambulance fiasco, the Mississauga and Oakville power plant cancellation and eHealth have shown Ontarians that the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government cannot be trusted with the administration of our province; and

"Whereas it is evident that the McGuinty-Wynne government has lost the confidence of Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately exercise its prime duty of holding the government accountable and bring a want of confidence motion to debate at the earliest opportunity."

I agree with this and will be signing it and handing it off to page Megan.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### STRONGER PROTECTION FOR ONTARIO CONSUMERS ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 RENFORÇANT LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR ONTARIEN

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 30, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 55, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 and to make

consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 55, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les agences de recouvrement, la Loi de 2002 sur la protection du consommateur et la Loi de 2002 sur le courtage commercial et immobilier et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I'm pleased to have some time this afternoon to speak to this particular piece of legislation. Actually, I should read this. It's entitled the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013, and I do want to thank our Minister MacCharles for introducing this legislation. The focus of it is obviously on consumer protection. It is the kind of legislation that I think, at the end of the day—and not to be presumptuous—all sides of the House and all three parties represented here in the House are likely to find a capacity to support, and I'll be interested in listening to the debate as we move forward, in terms of their comments on my 20 minutes this afternoon, and I will be here for some time this afternoon and have an opportunity to listen to their longer speeches on this particular piece of legislation.

I think at the end of the day, as governments, it is important that we never lose sight of the fact of who it is we represent on a constituency level, and sometimes these sorts of grassroots issues, if I can call it that, tend to slip sideways, I think, although as I speak here this afternoon, I'll have an opportunity to refer to some of the pieces that we've introduced before, including some of the specifics around what is contained in this legislation here today.

While the legislation is not focused only on seniors, I think it's fair to say that seniors are quite probably and possibly the people most affected, not necessarily by the contents of this legislation but by some of the work that we've done in the past on consumer protection pieces. It really is remarkable—as I was thinking about what I was going to say today—I think it is really quite remarkable when you think about, as a government and as opposition parties, how much time we spend focused on issues related to seniors. As I said, this legislation does not primarily focus on them, but much of consumer protection work and government legislation does. I think of the obvious example, while it's not consumer protection, but when we think about seniors, so much of what we do as a government is health care related. It is, of course, the biggest line item in our budget, about \$50 billion. It was, I think, about \$30 billion when we were elected in 2003. It's now approximating \$50 billion, almost 50% of the total provincial spending. We've seen the requirement. We've hired, I think, 15,000 more nurses and about 4,000 more doctors—so much of that work focused on seniors.

An example on the health care side would be our Wait Times Strategy. We brought in a Wait Times Strategy that identified the five first procedures, which were MRIs, hips and knees, cancer, cardiac and cataracts. Those were the first five on our Wait Times Strategy, and when you think about it and step back for a second, who is it that uses most of those procedures? Well, it's

seniors. And so, so much of what we do here has that particular focus.

I was doing a bit of reading the other day on the Ontario Drug Benefit, and when I was reading that, I found out that on the ODB, there are two million-plus seniors who have the benefit of that particular program that spends about \$4.5 billion a year of provincial money. It's not just two million seniors made up of over the age of 65. The \$4.5 billion does accommodate people in long-term-care homes and in other places, as well as the Trillium Drug Program. But the point is, there are two million seniors out there, and apparently about 14,000 more per month are finding themselves in that 65-and-older category. So we need to remain vigilant when it comes to issues related to seniors. I've given a little bit of an example of how the health care component tends to take up most of that work already, and that funding. But of course, as I've said, it's not primarily and only focused on them.

In fact, there was an article in the Chronicle Journal newspaper today in my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan—the main newspaper in northwestern Ontario—that was talking about some of the work that governments at all levels, whether it's municipal, provincial or federal, do in relation to consumer protection and initiatives, and it reminded me that from time to time, we have been criticized and called, based upon previous legislation, a nanny state. In fact, the former Premier was sometimes referred to as “Premier Dad.” It was a reference to the fact that on occasion over our nine going on 10 years of government we introduced legislation that some people found as being perhaps too interventionist into the lives of the people who live in the province of Ontario. But as I suggest to those people—and that's fine; they can have their opinions on whether sometimes we go too far or not. What I do notice from time to time, though, is that every time another election rolls around, rarely if ever has a party had as part of their platform something that would roll back those particular pieces of legislation.

By way of example, I can talk about our smoking-cessation legislation. I see that as consumer protection; I see that as protecting the people of the province of Ontario. I was on the municipal council in the city of Thunder Bay. We were, if not the first municipality in the province, one of the first that was leading the fight on protecting people in public workplaces when it came to the use of tobacco. I can remember the arguments to this day, and an old friend of mine who was on council beside me—my goodness; this I guess about 10 or 12 years ago now—who still then, in 2001, give or take, refused to acknowledge that second-hand smoke caused deaths. I remember it like yesterday. It was really remarkable. It's an example of legislation that we brought in provincially to deal with issues related to the health and safety of people.

Other examples would be the children's seat belt law, the pesticide act and a piece that was introduced, I think this week, by the minister dealing with cellphone bills.

You want to talk about a consumer protection piece that I think will go down as perhaps one of the most well-received pieces of legislation to come to this Legislature in quite some time? I think it's going to be this piece that's introduced dealing specifically with cellphones. The use of cellphones has become so incredibly pervasive, obviously not only in Ontario but around the world, that everybody who has one—and that's making up a larger proportion of the population every day—is affected by the terms and conditions attached to the use of those cellphones. I think many of us for some time have seen and felt that maybe we're not getting necessarily such a good deal here with some of the terms that are attached to these contracts. I think that this particular piece of legislation is well introduced this week by Minister MacCharles, dealing with cellphones and the prices that people have to pay, the difficulty getting out of the contracts. I think, Speaker, that when that one finds its way to the floor of the Legislature, people in this province are going to be very pleased and are going to be very happy with what we brought in. It is going to be one of the best pieces, I believe, of consumer protection legislation that we've seen come in and be very, very popular.

The one other example I will give before I move on to some of the specifics in this particular piece of legislation, Bill 55, I believe it is—and this would be an issue I would expect all members of the Legislature have dealt with at the constituency level since they've been a member here, and that has to do with energy retailers. It's incredible to think how much time and effort staff in my constituency office—and like everybody here, I'm sure we all love the staff that we have and the work that they do. How much time and effort staff in my constituency office—and if Sharla, Karen and Norine are listening, they'll know what I'm talking about—spent dealing—and again, in this case, primarily with seniors when it came to energy retailers in the province of Ontario. These were the people who would be going door to door, and they would be—I want to be careful with my language, but I don't think I'd be straying too far afield if I used the word “preying” upon the people who answered the door—as I've said, often, but not always, seniors—and selling them energy contracts, either electricity or gas.

**1610**

I can tell you that on a weekly basis, up until this train or avalanche of looking for help into my constituency office has slowed significantly in the last little while, since the reforms have been brought in—but two, three and four years ago, I would say on a monthly basis, it was not unusual for us to have 10, 20, 30 people in my constituency office who were just aghast, discouraged, angry, frustrated, worried, frightened at the situation they had found themselves in, and that was the contracts that they had signed with these energy retailers that were going door to door.

Now we had, I will tell you, great success as a constituency office, and I'm sure that other members in this place, through their staff, had similar successes. But



the point is that, as a government, we need to be aware of the fact that there are people out there—not all of them, but there are people out there, there are companies out there that tend to be unscrupulous in their business practices, who will be looking from time to time to make an easy buck and a quick buck by preying on consumers out there. Oftentimes, that turns out to be seniors. Again, it's not the only category of people we are looking to protect here today.

This particular piece of legislation—and I want to give a few examples of what is contained in this—deals with three or four specific categories of consumer protection. The first is door-to-door sales when it comes to water heaters. I was trying to connect before I came over here. I know we've had a few in my constituency office, dealing with water heaters. I don't think we've had too many of those yet. Hopefully that's a good sign. This legislation will discourage that practice even before, and hopefully, if it does pass, it will discourage even that work that's going on today, knowing that the legislation is before the House, and if we're lucky, we'll get this passed.

Here is some of what—and I'm going to take this from the statement that the minister read some time ago when she introduced this bill—the door-to-door sales specifically on the water heaters part would do. The proposed new rules, if passed, would “double the existing 10-day cooling-off period to 20 days for water heaters ... providing consumers with more time to consider their decision.” It would also—still dealing with water heaters—“ban delivery and installation of water heaters during the new 20-day cooling-off period.” It would also “allow rules requiring companies to confirm sales by making scripted and recorded telephone calls to the customer, and that key contract terms are disclosed in clear, easy-to-understand language.” And the fourth piece is “provide new customer protections when the rules are not followed, such as requiring the supplier to pay all cancellation fees when the 20-day cooling-off period is not observed.”

This cancellation fee piece is interesting. It crosses across all of the issues, whether it's cellphone contracts, whether it was energy contracts, gas or electricity. This cancellation piece was significant in making people feel very trapped in the contracts they may have signed, and it's significant that we underscore that.

That was the water heaters piece. As I mentioned, I know we've had a few of those in my constituency office, but I wouldn't say anywhere near the amount we had when it came to the energy retailing of electricity and gas.

One of the other pieces is debt settlement services, and this one is quite interesting. There are companies out there that are proposing to people that find themselves in difficulty when it comes to their credit—who are offering to try and help them by going off and negotiating better deals with the people who hold their debt, I guess it would be fair to say. Before they will do that, they are charging—not all of them I guess, but most of them, as I understand it, are charging a very significant upfront fee

that the person who is already in debt has to pay before the debt settlement company will go off and do the work they say they will do.

Now, there is no guarantee of success. There is no guarantee that the work will even be done. Yet we find these people, who already find themselves in difficult circumstances and are probably willing, unfortunately, to take even more risk than perhaps got them into the situation they find themselves in, in a very vulnerable place, I think it's fair to say. That would make the services that potentially might be provided by a debt settlement company, with no guarantee of success, somewhat attractive to them. So this particular piece is contained in this legislation as well: It's water heaters and debt settlement services.

The last one I want to talk about—my time is winding down; I have about five minutes left—is the one that deals with real estate reforms. That is contained within this legislation as well. The reason I found this one interesting is that we would perhaps have expected—maybe many people outside the GTA, maybe the members across the way who are not GTA members might not have seen this as a particularly serious issue in their ridings. Up until about five or six years ago, I as the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan would probably have said that same thing. But something is going on in my riding that makes this very relevant in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

The real estate reforms, of course, are trying to protect people when they get into real estate transactions. In my riding, for the last four or six years—I have spent almost my entire life living in Thunder Bay. Up until four or five years ago, you almost never—I think I could probably say never, but I won't. You could say that almost never would you have seen people who are entering the real estate market in Thunder Bay find themselves in the situation of being involved in a bidding war for residential real estate. I can tell you that for the last three to five years, that has been the norm.

I have a family member who was looking to purchase a property not that long ago; within the last month, actually. It was not an expensive home. It was on the lower end of the scale. I think it was around \$150,000 or \$160,000, very much what is a starter home. I know that maybe sounds like a ridiculous number to people in the GTA, but it was on the lower end—150. The family member put in a bid and found themselves in the situation where the home apparently had five, eight or 10—I forget how many; it doesn't matter—other multiple bids. The home at 150 ended up going for—whatever—20, 30 or 40 more.

Now, in Thunder Bay, as I've said, this is an incredibly new phenomenon for us. I've been telling people for quite some time—I'm very proud of the fact—that our riding has been one of the best economies in this province, relatively speaking, for the last three to five years. We have a manpower shortage where jobs are going unfilled because there are multiple companies that cannot find people to fill the jobs. We have had one of

the lowest unemployment rates in the province for the last three to five years. This has a lot to do with what's going on in our community that is driving the price of these homes.

That brings us back to these real estate reforms. What we're seeing in here is key reforms—there are others who are going to speak after me on this particular topic—that are going to require the people who are conducting the transaction to ensure that they can quantify and show the people who are buying or bidding on a property that there are in fact other offers, that they're not just telling you there are other offers and that you can see them as the person who is interested in buying the property.

This is not intended, of course, to cast aspersions on any industry, on individual real estate agents, on brokers or on anybody. I know probably 100 real estate agents in Thunder Bay personally. They all are out there trying to make a buck and do a good job. Both my parents, near the end of their lives, sold real estate for 15 or 20 years. So I know this industry; I know lots of people in the industry. We're not here to leave the impression that everybody is doing this, but from a consumer-protection angle, I think it makes sense, and that's why I said at the beginning of my remarks that I'm going to be interested to hear what other people have to say on this particular topic.

1620

I think it's fair to say that this makes great sense as a consumer protection piece for people who are bidding on properties in any part of the province, whether it is in Thunder Bay, whether it is in Toronto, whether it's in Oakville—you can pick the community—where we can state with certainty that if people are bidding on a home and somebody is telling you that that price has been bid up from the list price, you're going to have an ability, as someone who's looking to purchase the property, to know that that is in fact the case.

Speaker, my time is almost up. To recap: Again, I will thank very much the minister for bringing this forward. Again, the focus is consumer protection. I think as a government we've got a pretty good reputation—in fact, something that we've been criticized for. Some would say we've been too interventionist in our approach.

As I mentioned, the other one that's coming after this one, to deal with cellphones in the province of Ontario, I think, will ultimately be one of the best pieces of legislation in terms of the broad base of support that it has when it arrives on the floor of this Legislature. I look forward very much to that arriving here.

Speaker, I thank you for your time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Again, it's a privilege to address the points by my esteemed member from the wonderful riding of—

**Interjections:** Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** —Thunder Bay—Atikokan. Thank you. I apologize for that. I don't get an opportunity too often to address his comments. But there's always a first time.

He was hitting home with me on a few areas, especially in areas whereby there is a need to protect consumers, and he had mentioned seniors.

I've seen that happen as well, and you read about it in the papers where seniors are taken advantage of. With escalating energy costs that are occurring within this province, all of a sudden there seems to be these companies that pop out of the closet, and they have these wonderful, great rates that they want to tie people up and lock them in. I think there needs to be protection for that. There needs to be cooling-off periods for these people, because, in fact, they do get taken advantage of.

I do recall that even in my riding of Chatham—Kent—Essex, we do get people coming in, saying, “What do I do? I signed a contract, and now my rates are exorbitant. I should maybe have stayed more local, with a local”—in this particular case, a gas company, Union Gas, as a matter of fact. Yet they jumped to another company—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Darcy McKeough.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Darcy McKeough, absolutely. He was president of Union Gas for many years, and a great president as that.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** The last good Tory.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** He was one of many great Tories, one of a great many Tories in our riding. Thank you very much, Attorney General, for those wonderful comments. I'm sure he'll appreciate that.

Again, you know, we do need to have protection for these people, especially because they are a vulnerable population, and of course, on limited pensions and so on, they're counting their pennies. To be taken advantage of with high energy rates and companies coming in—I think it's very unfair. Again, I commend the member as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to stand up and talk about consumer protection. I think it's been a long time coming.

In response to some of the remarks that the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan mentioned, I actually would be in agreement with you on a number of issues, but on this one thing, the conversation around the cellphone protection, we actually started to have that debate, I think you'd remember—before we prorogued the Parliament—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Don't bring that up.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's true. I have to mention it, because it interrupted democracy. But that was the last time I stood up and mentioned that cellphone issue, and I want to tell you something: My 14-year-old son recently commented. He heard that the government is going to be doing something about cellphone billing and rights of consumers. This is what he said. He goes, “Finally, the government is going to do something for me.” I mean, it's one way to engage our youth, perhaps—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, that's yet to be seen, Catherine.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Yes, it's yet to be seen. Listen, we're going to do what we always do. We're going to try to make their legislation better and stronger, because



that's what we try to do. I mean, that's the way we see our role. I think that it's not going to be surprising in the debate—I'm going to have 20 minutes later on to comment further. We're really going to focus on the vulnerability of consumers in the province of Ontario. Quite honestly, this piece of legislation could be stronger. We're going to be focused on that, and I hope that the government is willing to listen on that.

Also, I have some examples, because this is—it's not a fictional issue. The issue of consumer protection and the rights of consumers is very much an issue. Especially as the economy gets more and more stressed, you see people get more and more desperate. So I think, in these times, we build some supports and defence for the consumers. I look forward to actually talking about this a little bit further.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to rise today and pass comment on the comments that were made by my seatmate, the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan. I think he did a tremendous job outlining the very practical aspects of Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act.

I guess all of us in this House would wish we didn't have the need for this bill. Unfortunately, there are those who partake in our economy who simply do it in an underhanded fashion, or they prey on individuals, or they simply sell items to people who don't really need them and don't really understand what they're buying.

If you look at the three examples of where this has the most effect, they're very ordinary, everyday things that ordinary Ontario consumers have to face on a daily basis. One of them is a milestone in somebody's life: when they buy their own piece of property. It could be a first home, it could be a retirement home, it could be a vacation home. But I think we should all have the anticipation that the agent we're dealing with is being forthright with us, is telling us the truth, that if there are other people interested in that property, that we know that there is a real interest and it's not an interest that's being manufactured simply to drive up the price.

A water heater is a necessity. You don't live in Canada without a hot water heater. It's that simple. You need one in your house. Every house in the province of Ontario would have one that would be gas-water, electric-water—whatever. It's something that is needed. Of course, those who spend a little bit more beyond their means, whether out of necessity or simply out of instant gratification, find themselves in a position where they can't fulfill their obligations—that is the last time in an individual's life when they need to have somebody prey on them. When they're actually trying to dig themselves out of a hole, they don't want to find that actually they've dug themselves deeper.

We're starting to hear stories about the debt settlement services. They're not good stories. I think that this act is going to do something about changing that and making sure that consumers in Ontario in these three areas have the ultimate protection.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I am glad to speak to the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan's comments. Out in the country, we have a certain few salespeople, and they get tailgate warnings. I don't know whether you've ever heard of a tailgate warning before, but when they drive out to the end of the laneway, and you see their tailgate, that's the end of the warning.

We've had that going on, particularly in the last few years, and it has to do with selling solar panels. In fact, there's a lady in my riding right now who's not hooked up to the grid and got sold a solar panel for over \$100,000, and she had to pay that. It's sitting there doing nothing. It's because of the excessive subsidies that were paid to some of these companies. They all jumped into the ball game and, unfortunately, there are people who are suffering over that right now.

**Interjection:** Blame the government.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Whoever we blame—but that's what happens when governments give out too much money for projects and subsidize industries: Everybody jumps into it and people get bitten.

The other—it's too bad that—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I agree with a lot of things in this protection act. Perhaps we should have had a government protection act for our consumers, and we wouldn't be in this mess with the gas plants right now.

We have older people—many people—who are having trouble paying their hydro bills these days, and now we are trying to protect them with this type of consumer protection.

There are a lot of good points in this thing, but I think the government has to realize that they probably caused a lot of these problems.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan has two minutes.

1630

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** Thank you, Speaker. Jeez, it was going so well there—right up until the last 30 seconds. I don't know what happened.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** They just can't help themselves. It's in their nature.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** He was put up to it, I think, Speaker.

Anyway, I'd like to thank the four members who spoke: Chatham–Kent–Essex, Kitchener–Waterloo, Oakville and Perth–Wellington.

The member from Chatham–Kent–Essex spoke most of his two minutes pretty much on part of the theme in my 20 minutes dealing with seniors. I think we all recognize that unfortunately, when it comes to fraudulent activities by unscrupulous business practices, often, but not always, the victim is a senior. As I said, since 2003 for me and my constituency office—I don't even enjoy recounting the number of times me and my staff have been involved with a senior who is at their wits' end in terms of trying to deal with a situation they have found themselves in, who trusted the person who came to their

door, who believed what they were told, who signed in good faith a contract that they thought was going to leave them in a better place, and who, very shortly thereafter, would find themselves in our constituency office—like others around the province, I'm sure—looking for support and help with this particular situation. As I mentioned, my staff is phenomenal and great, and we have been able to achieve a lot of success dealing with those contracts. But this is about being proactive, being on the front end and trying to limit a lot of the damage before it even happens.

The member from Kitchener–Waterloo: Thank you for your comments. The point about making it stronger: My goodness, of course we're open to that. We're happy to accept any strong, positive moves forward on the legislation. If we're fortunate at second reading and we get it to committee, I'm sure there'll be an opportunity there for us to deal with a lot of those ideas and issues you have.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You said that with such authority. You've obviously been taking a look at my riding and seeing what a great place it is. You'll want to make sure there's a lot of clarity when you identify down there. I appreciate that.

I want to start first by reminding people that some history is being made tonight. After nine years, the Toronto Maple Leafs will be playing a playoff game. It won't be at the ACC, but they will be playing at the TD Garden down in Boston. I know that everyone in Ontario, even those nasty Senators fans, is going to be hoping the Leafs are successful tonight because everybody knows the Toronto Maple Leafs are Canada's team. We hope they'll be successful.

I was watching the television as a young boy, just shy of 10 years old, when they won the Stanley Cup in 1967. I have hoped for a long time that I would still be alive when they won another one. And you know what? I feel if it's this year, I'm liking my chances. I just don't know how long I can go.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd like to thank the member for his sports update, the TSN moment; I appreciate that. But I do believe we were talking about a consumer bill.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You've even got support from the government side, which was very nice.

If you could get back to the bill after you've done your sports analysis, I'd appreciate it.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'm going to get there shortly, but what could be more important for consumers than the telecast of the Toronto Maple Leafs tonight? While they're watching that television, they're going to be bombarded with advertisements, Speaker—advertisements that are always out there trying to get the dollars

out of consumers' pockets. That's what we're talking about here. So tonight, when you're watching that hockey game, you're going to be seeing a plethora of very well-prepared advertisements designed to separate you from your hard-earned dollars. So be careful with that, but cheer hard for the Toronto Maple Leafs. I know that most of the members of my family will be cheering. I have a daughter who is a Montreal Canadiens fan and I don't know that it's ever going to change, but we remain hopeful.

Anyhow, of course we want to talk about the bill. I did want to comment a little bit about some of the things that the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan was saying. He has been raising some important points about consumer protection in the real estate realm, but he's not exactly accurate on some of the things he was speaking of.

My wife is a real estate agent, and I was a real estate agent before I got elected here. I don't know what happened to the folks in Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, but for some reason they decided that they would support my bid to get elected here, and here I am. The day after I got elected to this assembly, I resigned my real estate licence, so I have not practised since then, but being married to a real estate agent at least keeps me in the loop, so to speak.

He talked about multiple offers and competing offers. He implied that somehow someone would now be forced to tell you if the bids had gone over the listing price under this legislation. Well, this legislation does not provide for that because you are prohibited, as a real estate agent, from revealing what the amount of any other offer is. You're prohibited from revealing what the buyer is willing to pay or what the seller may be willing to sell their home for. That's why we have written offers, and I know this is going to stipulate that the offers must be in writing. I've always believed, and I can tell you that my wife has always believed, that all offers should be in writing anyhow, because that's the way to do business.

But there will be some important changes also with respect to how the fees are calculated for representing a client in a real estate transaction. Today you can either pay a commission or you can pay a flat rate. Under this legislation, you'll be able to pay a combination of both. I'm sure that the members of RECO and REBA will probably be happy to see some of those changes, but I'll have a discussion with some of the folks I do know, and particularly the one I know better than most—that would be my wife—and see what she thinks of these changes in Bill 55.

I know there were some things that the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan did refer to, and he is right that you will be able to see the offers, but that will only be after they are no longer active. No one would be allowed to see the offers while the bidding and the transaction is still active, because that would prejudice—it's just like the government says that we can't give out confidential information on the gas plants, the same thing. You have to protect your client in a real estate transaction or any other. You can't let someone else know what someone



else is bidding, otherwise you've prejudiced their opportunity to have a fair shot at making the purchase or the sale as well.

But post-transaction, yes, the real estate brokerage will be required to keep those records for a prescribed period of time, a time that is not prescribed in the bill, but presumably it will be prescribed by regulation by the ministry down the road, and then they will be required to keep the records of those transactions for that prescribed period of time. So someone who was involved in one of those multiple-offer situations will have the right to have a look at those papers to ensure that they were not being improperly led or informed on the fact that there were competing offers.

That also will protect brokers and sales representatives as well from the fact that someone else who was trying to drive the price up might say to another agent who says, "You know, I've got a client who is interested in property XYZ," and they say, "Well, I've already got an offer on that, but feel free to submit one, and I'll present the offers together to my client." Well, they will be able to confirm, down the road, when that transaction has been completed, whether or not there was in fact a competing offer.

So I think this is a positive thing. Consumer protection is a very important element of our society. The old saying of "caveat emptor"—let the buyer beware—I think still applies. I think the buyer does need to beware. No one can completely protect you. You do have a responsibility as a consumer to (a) educate yourself, and (b) keep your antennae tuned for being possibly victimized in some kind of a scam, and be—what's the word?—skeptical. Be skeptical so that you have this healthy skepticism so you ask yourself, "Hmm, does this sound too good to be true?" If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is. That's certainly a good rule of thumb, and I hope that most consumers would adopt that in their day-to-day lives when making these transactions.

1640

People have talked about—you know, we go back a few years to the electricity contracts. I was the energy critic for at least five, maybe six, years. Because of the nature, to be fair, the energy minister wouldn't be getting involved in those kinds of things. But I was just an opposition member, and I had the additional responsibilities of being the energy critic. I probably got more correspondence, calls, letters etc. from people across the province who found themselves trapped in an energy—particularly electricity—contract than any other member of this Legislature. I say that with all due respect to everyone there.

I even had members from my own caucus saying, "Hey, Yak, can you deal with this? Can you take care of this? Can you help my constituent?" And we did as much as we could. I would say that we got people excused from literally hundreds of contracts, maybe in the thousands, over that period of time, because we could clearly show there was a pattern of misrepresentation on the part of many of these aftermarket sellers.

I want to be clear. That wasn't the case universally—it wasn't everybody—and some companies were worse than others. But the reality is the circumstances they were put into: many times just a strictly commissioned transaction. There was a temptation to mislead the consumer, especially older, vulnerable people.

My mother-in-law was one of the people we got out of a contract. My mother-in-law was born in Lithuania and then lived in Germany. She was an ethnic German in Lithuania, moved to Germany, was a refugee during the war, ended up in Germany after the war and came to Canada in 1954. She had no English language skills. She never worked. She learned the language over the years, of course, but she never worked out of the home. She's been a widow since 1996.

She was visited by one of these contract sellers. It went on for months, and I didn't know about it. Finally, she did raise it with me. I wish she had contacted me before she signed the contract, but then again, that's why I say that people need to have this healthy skepticism and not believe everything they hear at the door. Anyway, we were able to get my mother-in-law extricated from that mess, but it wasn't that easy, because she had maintained the contract for a period of time.

Having consumer protection is a hugely important aspect of a society that wants to ensure we offer the vulnerable or those who are more susceptible to being shafted or cheated or given a raw deal some kind of protection.

Now, the government has brought forth this piece of legislation. We're not jumping fences over it or anything, but we do see some positive attributes in it. Part of this legislation will deal with water heater transactions. I used the example, of course, of electricity contracts, but you can juxtapose that into the legislation, which is more specific to hot water contracts. Again, the intention is to ensure that people might get pressured—that might be the word—into making a deal they otherwise may not get involved in—people have their tactics and their ways of making you feel you've got to buy it today. I think we've all been involved in a transaction sometime in our lives—you know, you've been walking through the mall and a guy stops you and says, "Hey, have I got a deal for you. I've got this thing. Do you have back pain, sir? You're walking like you're in back pain, sir. Come here. I've got something for you. Let me show you"; or, "Oh, your hands. I can give you some cream for those hands. My goodness gracious, your hands are going to be nicer than they've ever been before."

My friend from Nickel Belt is laughing. I know it has happened to her. She's been in a mall.

Everyone has their tactics. That's the way the world of sales—of being able to market your products—works. You have to make the decision: Is that something that I actually really want, or is that something that I feel that I've got to have now because they've created this idea in my head that if I don't have it I'm cheating myself?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** You shouldn't deny yourself.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, so if people say, "My goodness, I don't do that many things for myself. Today

I'm going to buy that fancy-dancy massaging machine that is going to make me—all of a sudden the Canadian Olympic team is going to be calling me"; fat chance of that, you know? But those are the kinds of things that happen in the world, and we have to be protective of people who are vulnerable. But number one, we always have to ensure that we're protecting ourselves. We always have to ensure that we're protecting ourselves.

My kids—I make sure that they have that healthy skepticism. The problem is, I think they've developed it when it comes to me. They've developed a healthy skepticism about things I tell them now, and that of course is a concern for me. However, I think as they get a little older they're going to start to realize that I'm maybe not as smart as I claim but not as dumb as they might have thought.

Anyway, we're looking forward to getting this bill into committee and seeing what changes can be made. Perhaps people from the Real Estate Brokers Association or the Ontario Real Estate Association, OREA—I'm sure they'll be willing to come to committee and offer their views on how this legislation might be strengthened or streamlined. I'm sure that there will be consumer advocates and groups that will want to speak to committee as to how this legislation might be strengthened or streamlined.

One of the things I haven't talked about much is, basically, the selling of debt, or the collection agreements, which is to some degree the transferring of the responsibility to collect debt, where somebody has a debt and there are people out there who are willing to buy that debt, but they want to buy it for X number of cents on the dollar. Then they are in a position where they may make a profit.

If you owed somebody a lot of money, and they didn't think you were going to pay, and they said, "Well, are you interested in the debt? We'll sell it to you at 40 cents on the dollar," if they think that 40 cents is more than they were going to get—but if I have a good approach, maybe I'll get 60 cents, and I'm up 20 cents. That's kind of how the selling of debtor contracts works. I'm not 100% sure; I haven't really deciphered completely exactly what they mean in the bill, but that's why we're having this debate. Maybe the opportunity to speak at committee or listen at committee will help us in that regard.

One of the things I do want to talk about, and I am limited in time—I cannot believe it; I think something is wrong with that clock. It's running fast, Speaker. There's something happening that it's going faster than usual. But I do want to also talk about protecting people from the government.

My colleague Todd Smith from Prince Edward-Hastings spoke yesterday. He talked about the TSSA; that's the Technical Standards and Safety Authority. You know, Speaker, I get more complaints about the Technical Standards and Safety Authority than just about anything in my riding, because—you see what happens. It was a great idea to bring in such a body, but this

government then has given them way too much freedom. That's the problem. This government has allowed the TSSA to act like a nation unto themselves, like they are not answerable to anybody. They never have to ask themselves the question—or maybe they do, and they just don't care: "It doesn't matter if I put Joe out of business." They don't care. There's not enough common sense injected into the way they do their everyday work.

**1650**

Anybody can live life by a rule book. We just have to live by a rule book; we never have to make a decision. But it's the people who make life better—those are the ones who know when to use the rule book, when they should interpret the rule book and sometimes when they should put the rule book aside and see if there's a way of working with that other party to make the situation completely safe but in a way that does not jeopardize the ability of someone to stay in business.

We're back to the real estate. The TSSA: There's a conspiracy out there, and I don't know if it's with TSSA or the insurance companies, to get people out of home heating with oil, because, I'll tell you, you can't find an oil tank out there in a home today that they won't condemn. They walk in there, and the minute they look at it, it's condemned. That thing could be as sound as a dollar—well, the dollar is not doing too bad. It could be as sound as a dollar, as they say, but they're going to find a way to condemn that because they want to get people out of home heating fuel. I'm convinced of that. I see it all the time, and it's unfortunate. There are a lot of people, when they're doing a real estate transaction and then all of a sudden they get hit with one of these, the oil tank is condemned and the standards they have to put in to replace it—you're looking at \$2,000 to put in a new oil tank. For some people, that can jeopardize the ability to sell their home, because they've already agreed to a price, and then when they get hit with a new oil tank, they don't know if they can afford that or not.

Anyway, Speaker, there are a lot of ways that we can improve this bill, and we're going to get at it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I just want to comment on the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I really enjoyed his TSN moment. I feel his pain about having one of them Habs fans in your house. Unfortunately, one of my sons turned on me as well and kind of went down that way. He's a Leafs fan at heart, I'm sure. Unfortunately, he does cheer for the Habs. Although I love my wife and I do walk the street with her when she wears that Ottawa Senators shirt—I think she does that just to spite me. But I feel his pain and his struggles in his household.

What I did want to talk about are some of the tactics he talked about when we actually got to speaking about this bill—the tactics that are being used by some of these door-to-door salesmen. They're really targeting seniors, particularly in areas in my riding where there are predominantly strong populations of seniors. I've talked



about this before in the past, and I thought I'd raise it again. It's a term that's called bait and switch. What they do is, they send out these wonderful ads. Either they announce it on TV or they put it out in the mail, and they bait an individual to contact them, in order to get a salesman at their door with a better, revised program or a product that will give them substantial savings. Once they get to your door, they overwhelm you with a whole lot of information. By the end of your call, the bait is done, the switch is in and you find out that where you were looking to getting a \$20 or \$30 savings, by the time they leave your door, you're paying for something you didn't even need but you're paying three or four times more, but they've convinced you that you absolutely need their product.

I'm really glad that he touched on that, and I'm hoping to hear a little bit more about those tactics over the course of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and francophone affairs.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Ça me fait plaisir de me lever aujourd'hui pour parler en faveur de ce projet de loi.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Consumer Services for the good work that she has been doing since she was appointed in that portfolio.

Yes, my office would talk to me—at one point, almost every Friday—about these seniors who were forced to or were convinced to sign an agreement to buy electricity at a cheaper rate. When they received the bill a couple of months later, it was for a lot more than they used to be charged. So then they were trying to get out of that contract, and it was impossible. So, of course, when I arrived on Friday, I had to deal with these situations.

Sometimes it was not seniors, but they had such a good story at the door that they were able to convince business people. One owner of a seniors' home in my riding was caught in that situation.

So one Saturday, I'm at home, and the doorbell rang. I'm by myself and this 6-foot-tall, 200-pound guy enters the house and introduced himself as working for the government, and he tried to—not convince me, but his voice was going up and up. For people who know me, I'm not scared, so I stood up to him. But to be able to convince him to leave my home, I said, "Okay, give me your information and I'll call you back. I'll talk to my husband." At the time, I didn't have a husband, but I said, "I'll talk to my husband."

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Yes, I know. Then I realized that the tactic that they use is not a good tactic. This legislation will be able—perhaps not to prevent all these situations but a lot of them, and I applaud the minister for bringing this to the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Huron-Bruce.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It's a pleasure to stand here and reflect on the comments that were shared by our honourable member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke,

because he really brought a lot of things to light and underscored it with his final statement saying that there are lots of ways to improve this bill, and that's why we're willing to put it through to committee and help the government get it right. I'd be remiss if I didn't note that in 2002, it was actually our PC leader, Tim Hudak, that introduced the Consumer Protection Act. So it's great to see this type of legislation evolve to address the needs of today, our current times.

I say that because, since 2009, in rural Ontario specifically and in my riding of Huron-Bruce, we've experienced a different type of door-to-door salesperson. My colleague from Perth-Wellington touched on the solar side of it. But I can tell you, at my own door we had a very bad experience with an industrial wind turbine salesperson. They told us that our neighbours had signed and that if we didn't sign, we would be losing part of our land because they would take it because they needed approaches to the turbine and they had abilities to pressure us into signing a lease. It was just horrible, some of the pressure tactics that were used from community to community. They would go into the local coffee shops, mine information about families and use that against them as they tried to pressure them into signing leases. Eventually, organizations like the Ontario Federation of Agriculture had to develop an information package to make people aware of these types of tactics so that people were educated when these types of salesmen came to impose themselves to try to get them to sign turbine leases. We need this. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I'm pleased to stand up and offer some brief comments on Bill 55. I see in looking through the bill that there's mention of water heaters, but one thing that's sorely lacking—I know it's something that members in this House have already raised—is the fact that energy retailers are not covered. In Kenora-Rainy River, it's probably one of the biggest issues that I hear—that I heard when I worked for the former member, and that I still hear. In fact, before being elected, I spent a lot of time going door to door myself, offering information sessions to people so they could understand some of the tactics.

I've seen it all. I've seen it where they target seniors, youth, people who have low incomes. When they promise that kind of financial stability, that's really attractive for people who are just barely making ends meet. They also push their way into homes where people might have English as a second language. There's nothing that they won't do. I've seen everything from them offering these little sheets where they've got a few little houses that are brown houses with all the dirty energy and then there are the happy little green houses on the street that, apparently by signing up with a contractor, are going to get this magical green energy, which, of course, doesn't happen.

1700

They've assured savings of money. They've even told people that Union Gas no longer is going to be servicing

their area. But the part that I find most disgusting—and it's something that this government has an opportunity to address right now. They need to crack down on these companies offering gift cards, cheques in the mail, where, by signing the back, you agree to enter into a five-year term at an inflated rate. The most galling is that they will send out prepaid MasterCards to people who have low incomes right before Christmas. That is absolutely disgusting. This government needs to focus some of their attention on that instead of some of these fluffy things.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I appreciate the comments from the member for Algoma–Manitoulin, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the member from Huron–Bruce and the member for Kenora–Rainy River. I appreciate all their comments on what we had said earlier today. You know, we just kind of encapsulated and reiterated.

Now, I will say, there are some things, and I won't have time to go into them in the two minutes that I have left, that this bill fails to accomplish, and that's why we need to get the bill into committee, after we have a good, full debate. I know there are many members of our caucus who want to debate this piece of legislation because it is a new piece of legislation that we need to take a close look at.

We all have the responsibility, as legislators here, to ensure that in a society such as ours we take proper measures to protect those who are least able to protect themselves.

I appreciate the comments from the minister with regard to the salesman coming to her door and acting in an intimidating fashion. Fortunately for her, she's not one who is easily put off or she's not easily intimidated, and I've known that personally, but not everybody is like that. Some people are very vulnerable when they're in that situation, and then they end up signing that kind of contract, like my mother-in-law, and then she felt ashamed that she had done it. That's probably one of the reasons she didn't call me right away because she thought, "Oh, I shouldn't have done that," and then it went on for months. We were able to get her out of it, but at the same time, how many people are out there who we didn't get out of a contract, because they haven't called us or they haven't called their MPP? How many are still out there who have been mistreated by an unscrupulous door-to-door salesperson? We need to protect those people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Some very good comments, actually, I think, this afternoon. This is a very interesting debate. I think we all care deeply about the people we serve, and we want to make things better from a consumer protection perspective.

This bill makes a start, I think, at addressing a very widespread issue in Ontario. However, most of the

measures presented are admittedly small steps and a number of them could be strengthened. The truth, or the truth as I understand it, is that millions of consumers face problems in the marketplace each year and a significant number of them are vulnerable consumers.

Ontario needs a strong consumer advocate. People need someone conveniently located to advocate on their behalf so they can seek assistance in person. Not everyone is as lucky as the member, who would go and advocate on behalf of his parent. Some people live in great isolation, and so having a consumer advocate who's in your community, who's easily accessible, would make a difference. I think, actually, this is something that we'll be pursuing as this legislation moves forward.

From the perspective of the most vulnerable consumers, assuming they face barriers such as illiteracy, lack of language skills or disability, in combination with low income and the lack of access to telephones, Internet or transportation—and all of us have these people living in our ridings, all of us have tried to advocate on behalf of folks who don't have access to the financial situation which actually gives them a position of power—these are barriers that deprive many vulnerable consumers of fair treatment. In fact, many are denied equal access to government-funded services intended to support consumers. So, in reviewing schedule 1, around the amendment to the Collection Agencies Act to regulate debt settlement services, this bill attempts to provide vulnerable consumers with protection against unfair business practices of companies that offer debt settlement services.

Now, debt settlement service agencies offer a service whereby they enter into negotiations with creditors on behalf of the consumer in return for a fee. Often, the fee is incredibly high and is agreed to by the consumer after being told that their debt will be dramatically reduced by the settlement agency; in fact, they're promised that their debt will be reduced. In reality, this upfront fee can force consumers into more debt.

Also, there is no guarantee that there will be a satisfactory outcome; debt may not actually be reduced. We have experience from this as well. I, myself, was just contacted by a citizen in my riding about this very issue. In asking for help, they actually ended up further behind.

Consumers who choose to use debt settlement services often find their situation worsened if a settlement is not reached, and they may still have to pay fees to the debt settlement service, despite not obtaining a settlement. These outcomes are a growing issue of concern, being that debt settlement agencies have increased their activity in the province of Ontario in the past several years. With increased marketing and advertising, we can only expect to see increases in these types of negative outcomes.

What schedule 1 does propose is to prohibit the payment of upfront fees before the debt settlement services are provided and to limit the amount of the fees charged overall. So this is good. This means debt settlement services operators would only be paid for actual results rather than efforts to obtain results. Schedule 1 also pro-



poses to allow debtors to cancel their agreement without having to give a reason, within 10 days of receiving a copy of the agreement. Finally, it would prohibit misleading sales practices and advertising. If companies fail to follow these new rules, the new legislation would allow for the revocation of the mandatory licences. This is also something that needs to happen, and this requires oversight, which we know is an ongoing issue, actually, in the province.

What schedule 1 does not address: Many debt settlement companies are based in the United States and have been advertising debt negotiation and debt settlement services to Ontarians. We need to protect Ontarians from increased advertising by debt settlement agencies. Consumers should be aware of all of their debt management options and that debt settlement is not necessarily the best option.

This bill also doesn't address the issue of credit counsellors, who are often mistaken for debt settlement agencies. Credit counsellors are not regulated but should be held accountable to the same standards as debt settlement companies.

Schedule 2: the attempts to curb aggressive door-to-door water heater rental tactics. It's important that this issue be addressed, seeing as, in 2012 the Ontario government received more than 3,200 written complaints and verbal inquiries about door-to-door water heater rentals, the second most common source of complaints and inquiries. Hot water heater salespeople take advantage of vulnerable or unsuspecting customers and use many tricky tactics to try to secure signatures on contracts.

I know that the government side has sort of tiptoed around the fact that there's a predatory nature to these folks. These people are trying to make a living, but they need to be held to the same regulations and the same laws to protect the consumers. Many people report being flat-out lied to by these water heater salesmen or women. Some claim to be from the local municipality or the homeowner's current water heater provider. Sometimes they claim to represent the government, and this is well documented. Sometimes they say that new regulations have been passed that mean a homeowner needs to or must replace a heater's venting system to comply, or that testing has shown the heater to be using energy inefficiently.

This is unacceptable. We need to protect those who are vulnerable to these kinds of tactics from being targeted, and one of the number one demographics that is being targeted are seniors. I think that we have to be honest and acknowledge that seniors are actually living on fixed incomes and they're looking to save money. So when someone comes to their door and makes this promise and says that the municipality, for instance, has come on their behalf, this is duplicitous, it's deceitful, and we need to protect seniors in that regard.

1710

There are a couple of examples from my own riding of Kitchener-Waterloo. Something like this actually took place in the Waterloo region recently. In February of this

year, CTV Kitchener reported that in the weeks following an explosion that destroyed a home and sent four people to hospital, neighbours had noticed an increase in door-to-door water heater and furnace salesmen. The salesmen claimed that the explosion was caused by faulty gas pipes and tried to convince residents that they needed to purchase new water heaters or furnaces in order to prevent a similar explosion in their own home. So, basically, they were using fear as their sales pitch. Meanwhile, the firefighters who had investigated the scene said that they had found nothing to indicate that people should be concerned with their water heaters or furnaces.

Last summer, in my region, it became such a problem that in June of last year, the Waterloo Record, our local newspaper, actually published a warning about door-to-door salesmen who were claiming to be city employees and asking to check people's furnaces and water heaters in order to try to sell them a new one. You can see how one might be concerned enough to make such a purchase if you had been led to believe that a city official was informing you that you needed to do so.

My constituency office has received calls from senior citizens who find the experience of door-to-door salespeople to be very intimidating. I've heard similar stories from other members in my caucus and actually in this entire House. This is a problem that exists for all Ontarians.

I want to say what schedule 2 does. To address this, schedule 2 of the bill puts forward several proposed solutions. It doubles the existing 10-day cooling off period to 20 days for water heaters, allowing a more substantial amount of time for customers to consider their decision. This is good. It looks to ban delivery and installation of water heaters during the new 20-day cooling-off period, again, to allow consumers to deliberate without unwanted influence.

It looks at creating rules requiring companies to confirm sales by making a scripted and recorded telephone call to the customer and that key contract terms are disclosed in clear, easy-to-understand language, to ensure that the consumer is absolutely aware and absolutely sure what they are agreeing to. It also proposes that when the rules are not followed, there are consequences, such as requiring the supplier to pay all cancellation fees when the 20-day cooling-off period is not observed. We believe that this is a step in the right direction, as it takes measures to provide consumers with more protection against aggressive, high-pressure, door-to-door water heater rental sales tactics.

However, one thing that this bill does not deal with is direct energy retailers, who are one of the biggest sources of complaints. This is an example of how this bill falls short and how it could be strengthened by covering a broader spectrum of door-to-door sales pitches. As I mentioned in the previous example that took place in my region, furnace salesmen were using the same tactics to take advantage of consumers as water heater salesmen.

Schedule 3, the third part, deals with issues related to real estate sales. It requires real estate brokers acting on

behalf of a buyer to be more transparent with regard to the bidding process. If this legislation were to pass, real estate brokers would only be able to present an offer in writing to a potential buyer. Often, people are pressured into raising their offer or rushing into the purchase of a home because they've been told that multiple offers have been made when this is not really the case. The Real Estate Council of Ontario, RECO, reported thousands of complaints from buyers and sellers who had been pressured by these exaggerations.

This legislation, if passed, would ensure that written proof be provided of any other offer so that the potential buyers are certain that they are not being pressured unnecessarily. Salespeople and brokers would also be prohibited from suggesting or claiming that a written offer exists when one does not. Brokerages acting for the seller would also be required to retain copies of all written offers related to the sale or purchase of the property so that they could be referenced at a later date. Finally, any person who has made a written offer to purchase a particular home may ask the registrar at the Real Estate Council of Ontario to determine the actual number of written offers that were received and to report that number.

So this is, in our view, a very strong measure of accountability. I think that the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan has correctly indicated that without these measures, consumers are sort of left in a grey zone. This is driving up multiple offers, driving up the prices of houses and driving down the possibility of people owning a home.

These provisions would provide the necessary transparency to the bidding process in order to protect consumers from overpaying under false pretenses or from rushing into such a significant decision that for most people already creates high levels of stress. I think we can all relate to the stress, the pressure and the tension around buying a home, and we do believe that some of these measures that have been suggested in this legislation actually would alleviate some of that, or at least create some clarity around the purchase of a home.

A separate amendment would remove the ban on charging both fees and commissions. It would allow real estate agents to charge a combination of a percentage and a fixed amount. This change will make Ontario's real estate marketplace consistent with all other provinces in the country, while responding to a recommendation of the Competition Bureau. However—and this is key—it is not clear that allowing real estate agents to charge both flat fees and commissions is in any way a step forward.

In conclusion and as a brief summary, this bill does take a number of small steps, we believe, in the right direction in terms of consumer protection. In fact, perhaps it may open the door to other areas where we can actually build in some supports or some safety measures for consumers. However, there are ways in which some of these steps could be strengthened, and I hope that if this gets to committee, as it should, we can actually build some supports right into the legislation.

As I said at the beginning, Ontario needs a strong consumer advocate to assist the millions of consumers that face problems in the marketplace each year. Consumers need to be made more aware of the resources available to help them. They need an advocate that can follow up on consumer complaints, especially for vulnerable populations, who are so often taken advantage of in the consumer market.

I look forward to hearing expert testimony at the committee session. I look forward to the further debate, and I look forward to being a part of the conversation about how to make this legislation a little stronger. I know, because I've consulted with the people in Kitchener–Waterloo, that they are very receptive to having measures put in place so that they are protected. I think that is part of our job as legislators, and I also think it's part of our job to work together to make that happen.

I look forward to the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Waterloo for her comments. I had 20 minutes just a little while ago on this particular bill, and I didn't hear all of her speech, but it's not a complete surprise. I think we're going to find, hopefully, especially from the official opposition, a sense of common purpose when it comes to this particular piece of legislation.

As I mentioned when I made my remarks—I spent a fair bit of time out of my 20 minutes talking and focusing on the impact of consumer protection legislation on seniors specifically. This legislation and legislation that we have introduced previously that deals with consumer protection issues are of course not only focused on seniors, but I think all of us who have been around this place for a little bit of time and have manned constituency offices for a bit of time will understand that far too often, the greatest proportion of people that seem to be negatively affected by predatory practices, unscrupulous business practices, tend to be seniors.

As I mentioned earlier, I can remember a two- to three- or four-year period where it seemed like there was almost a constant parade of people coming into my office with issues directly related to consumer protection pieces, some of which, I think, to be fair, we've managed to land and find in a very good place. So I'm pleased to hear—so far, at least—that there seems to be a lot of buy-in for this legislation. I can't imagine why there wouldn't be.

As I said earlier, as well, we hope that this legislation will pass at second reading and be referred to committee. Like all legislation, we're open to positive ideas and suggestions, anything that the members of the other two parties may think can help to make this particular bill stronger.

As I also mentioned, I'm very excited by the bill that was introduced earlier this week dealing with cellphones and issues related to cellphones. We think that's going to be a great piece and very popular with the people in the province.



1720

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Of course, to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, as she has indicated as well, we need to protect all consumers. But as the member from the government side had mentioned earlier as well, we talked about the importance of protecting perhaps one of the more vulnerable age groups, and that's our seniors as well.

You know, I mentioned earlier in a previous discussion that rising energy costs are in fact a huge issue for all Ontarians across this great province of ours. Of course, with these seniors, not only are they concerned about rising energy costs—how are they going to pay for it, especially on limited pensions? Then, all of a sudden, these vulture-type companies come along to try and take advantage of those who are perhaps more susceptible to being influenced than perhaps those who may be more in the know.

You know what? I look at, for example, Union Gas, a local company in my riding. Again, I do know specifically—I mean, I used to work for that company for many years, great years. They were a trustworthy, honest and reputable company. Now, all of a sudden, you get some of these what I call fly-by-night companies that want to take over your gas bill and promise you the world, but they don't give you anything other than added—

*Interruption.*

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Pardon me. I think it might have been a little gas indigestion I may have had there.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Perhaps it wasn't either. However, what I do want to say is that down in my area, also, we have wind turbines. There are a lot of these wind turbine salespeople who go along to the farmers and they try to entice the farmers in putting these wind turbines on their properties. To those salespeople I say, "You know what? You're only as good as your last sale, and that's it." They take advantage of people, especially down in the great riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. I suggest the member sees his physician. I'm very concerned.

Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I think there was a lot of focus in the debate today—and I thank the member for Kitchener–Waterloo for her remarks—on the unscrupulous salespersons, but not as much on the companies these salespeople actually work for. I know that I've talked to many salespeople at my door over the years, particularly since hydro was deregulated by the PC government and with all of these new marketing companies coming on board. Many of these people are considered independent contractors. They are not employees of these companies. In my view, you know, they're pushing these contracts because they work strictly on commission. They should be covered under the Employment Standards Act. They should be employees. They should

be getting minimum wage plus commissions, but they feel pressured as well to be able to bring that paycheque home to support their families. Many of them are new immigrants to this country who have not been able to find work in their own field or are youth who are not able to find jobs in this province.

I think that there needs to be more teeth in the legislation, that these companies, not only would they lose their licence, have their licence revoked, but they would be fined, because all they're going to do is close that door and they're going to reopen tomorrow under another name. We all watch Marketplace and W5, and that's what happens. They rip off seniors, but it isn't just seniors they rip off. I know some middle-class, smart, educated people who have been ripped off and have been paying 42 cents a kilowatt hour for a five-year contract when the rest of us were paying 18 cents.

So, the legislation is good, but I think we're going to need to be making a lot of amendments to it to make sure that it meets the needs of all the people in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and francophone affairs.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Merci, Mr. Speaker. I cannot be so adamant than to say to people who are listening today, "Watch out. We're going to change the legislation, but be very careful."

I wanted to talk to you about the door-to-door water heater rental contracts.

Just in 2012, the ministry received over 3,200 complaints and inquiries on water heater rentals, which continue to rank number two on the ministry's top 10 complaints list. I can say to you that 3,200 is not the total number of complaints, because every one of us here in the House has had these complaints. Currently, the Consumer Protection Act only has limited protection for consumers with regard to door-to-door water heater rentals.

If this legislation and its regulations pass, with better consumer protection for door-to-door water heater rentals, to require plain language and prohibit delivery during an extended 20-day cooling-off period—that is so important because, again, I'm talking about my own personal experience. My sister had this guy who came to her door and promised all the reductions she would get if she changed her water heater, and he was coming the next day to change it. So I said, "Call right away and cancel it." They know the tricks. They know how to enter a home, and they know how to convince people. Like you said, it's not only seniors; it's middle-class people and smart people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Kitchener–Waterloo has two minutes.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Thank you to the members from Chatham–Kent–Essex, Thunder Bay–Atikokan and Welland, and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

I think there is common ground on this piece of legislation, because all of us have these personal stories.

All of us know people who actually have fallen victim to very aggressive, somewhat deceitful proprietors who feel that the rules do not apply to them, and the rules do. If we're thinking of the goals of this legislation, we should also be cognizant that we have a whole generation coming up through the education system, for instance, and we need to build some skills for those future consumers. It should be part of the curriculum that you have certain rights as a consumer and that the rights of companies don't trump your rights as an individual citizen.

To that end, quite honestly, all provinces of Canada should consider and should encourage and adopt the teaching of consumer protection and awareness in schools, starting at grade 6. All of us actually know of some youngster who got the parents' credit card and made a purchase through the Internet. It's just ridiculous, some of the stories we've heard, but it's better to build in those strengths and skills than try to undo the damage afterwards. Certainly that's how I feel about this.

I think I share the warning, in these times of stressful economic pressures that people are exhibiting, that if someone comes to your door and says, "This is the best deal," and it sounds like it's too good to be true, it is. Actually having some common sense at the door is one thing, but building in some protection for the consumer at a provincial level is the ultimate goal.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I'm pleased to stand in my place in this Legislature to make my contribution to the debate on Bill 55, An Act to amend the Collection Agencies Act, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

Part of this legislation, which is very important to many people, is schedule 2, which amends the Consumer Protection Act, 2002: "A supplier under a direct agreement that requires the supplier to supply to the consumer a water heater or other goods or services that are prescribed by the regulations shall not supply the heater or the goods or services, as the case may be, until a 20-day cooling-off period that the consumer has for cancelling the agreement under the act has expired."

That's very important. The bill gives the consumer 20 days to cancel an agreement, twice the time that is provided under the existing legislation, and that's very important.

These door-to-door high-pressure salespeople became quite prominent with the sale of gas and electricity—we've all heard about those. There may have been some deals for consumers, but most of these companies were making big dollars out of these sales and generally were taking advantage of people who did not have adequate facts at their disposal. They had all the phrases, all the keywords, all the arguments. The consumer, the person at the door, did not have that information; did not know what was going on. There were many, many, many people who were fooled and got into contracts and they paid a lot more money.

1730

The scare tactics and misinformation forced many people—often the elderly—into contracts that were not fair and resulted in high costs to the consumer. The latest hoax has to do with water heaters. Last year, there were 3,200 written complaints against unscrupulous businesses fast-talking people into buying a new hot water tank while they still had adequate tanks under existing contracts. That is 30 complaints for each riding. How many more went unreported? Many, many more. Consumers were left paying for two hot water tanks and had to pay to get rid of one tank. To add insult to injury, the companies will often cite inconsistent penalty fees to terminate service agreements. Early termination fees have been quoted to some of my constituents to be as high as \$4,000 to \$5,000. That's from my office staff today. I find that just horrible.

The best solution, therefore, is not to deal with these thieves. Rather, it is to obtain competitive prices from reputable suppliers. My wife signed a deal at the door for electricity and I had difficulty getting out of that contract, but I finally did. I had a salesman who came and wanted to see the bill, so I wanted to go through the process with them. It is unfair, the level of information the consumer has and the sales pitch the salespeople have. Since we both had bad experiences at the door, we refuse to speak to salespeople. We still let neighbours in, of course. That is the advice we give: Do not deal with door-to-door salespeople. Seek out reputable firms and ask for competitive quotations.

Our constituency office is working on several cases where people have been swindled, but once it is done, it is almost impossible to obtain justice. The most common phone call we get is on the issue of being pressured by door-to-door salesmen from various companies. On many occasions, the salesperson at the door wanted to see the residents' invoices and at times would even go so far as to try and enter the home. This has especially been the case with hot water tank sales.

There are three instances where constituents have fallen victim to door-to-door sales scams I would like to mention here. On one occasion, a constituent, originally with Direct Energy, switched their services to another company. They did not deliver the new hot water tank, so the constituent called for the follow-up. Much to the constituent's surprise, she was required to obtain a removal authorization number. It took five months to resolve the issue, and in the meantime, she was being charged by both companies.

On another occasion, an elderly woman from my riding, when trying to sell her home, found out that there was a lien on her hot water tank. Not only was this constituent not made aware of this situation; this also got her into serious financial troubles.

Other constituents of mine have also notified me of over-billing. In many cases, the over-billing extended over the course of several months, resulting in a large accrual of charges. In one case, a constituent was over-charged over \$400 for their hot water tank. In another



similar case, companies have attempted to debit constituents' bank accounts for sums in excess of \$1,500. It is appalling and disconcerting to hear this sort of consumer abuse happening in this day and age, but it does.

Schedule 3 of this bill deals with the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002. The act is to be amended. "A registered brokerage acting for a seller is required to retain, for the period of time prescribed by the regulations made under the act, copies of all written offers that it receives to purchase real estate. A person who has made a written offer to purchase real estate or a registrant under the act acting on behalf of such a person may request that the registrar appointed under the act make an inquiry to determine the number of written offers that a brokerage acting for a seller has received to purchase the real estate." Now there will be a record of all offers made. All offers have to be in writing, and these offers can be obtained by the registrar. "The registrar is required to disclose that number to the person who requested the inquiry."

This amendment would further protect people from unscrupulous agents who use misinformation to drive up the selling price of real estate. As the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke said, this is not a situation that comes to our office in Orléans; it's not a situation that he is familiar with in his area. I believe most real estate agents are very, very fair.

In addition, flexibility is provided for remuneration. It can be a combination of both a fixed amount and a percentage fee. It was either/or in the past; now it can be both. I'm not aware of the advantages of that, but I know that the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke said that this is a good idea. I would think that people who are conversant with it know that it is an improvement.

The third part of this bill, schedule 1, addresses the Collection Agencies Act. I am addressing this part of the bill last because it's something that I have not seen as presenting problems in Orléans. However, we don't see all the issues, and I must say that the proposed amendments to this act are important steps to be taken to further protect Ontario consumers.

What strikes me as highly beneficial to consumers is the creation of particular rules regarding debt settlement services activities by collection agencies and collectors. The requirement of the registration of collection agencies or collectors is also of critical importance. If a collection agency or collector is not registered, neither is it entitled to any payment.

The implementation of this bill, Bill 55, is very important. It seems to be getting good support within the Legislature. It will ensure stronger protection for consumers, for our constituents and for our communities that we all work so hard to represent in this House.

I've been representing my community here for 10 years, and even longer if I include other leadership and representative roles I've had. I would like to speak about my community here, because it is a poster child for linguistic minority communities in Canada. In Orléans, we have 35,000 francophones living together with 75,000 anglophones and other minority groups. It was not

always so. When I was growing up on a farm along the Ottawa River, Orléans was a community of 300 to 400 souls. St. Joseph church was the hub of the community. There were two stores: one was Montpetit's; the other was Boisvenue's. And Dr. Major was the health system.

The farms are quite large, and one of the orders of sisters operated one large dairy farm. There were many good French farmers, and the area was beautiful, lying along the Ottawa River. The soil was clay, was tough to till, and cropping was often difficult, especially if the falls were wet. The soil, though, was very fertile. The Kennys and McNeelys joined the French farmers in the 1930s, worshipped at the same church and became a strong part of a successful community.

I was born in Cumberland. It was primarily English-speaking, but the French minority were a large part of our community. In the rural area I lived in, there were two schools across from each other on Beckett's Creek Road: The public school, where English was the language, had about 25 kids; and the Catholic school, which was French and English—depending on which teacher was hired. Sometimes we had a French teacher and we learned French, and some years we learned English from an English teacher.

My best friends were the Lalondes, Hupés, Ladouceurs and Michauds. They were good outdoor people. We fished the Ottawa River and often built rafts for our rowboats. In winter, we always had a skating rink on Sharkey's Bay.

Cumberland grew into a city and Gloucester grew into a city, and they shared Orléans, which continued to grow. When Gloucester and Orléans joined the new city of Ottawa in 2000, Orléans became a large community and has continued to grow as a strong community within our city. Today, Orléans is a very successful community, and probably the largest linguistic minority community in Ontario. As such, it is protected both under the Official Languages Act and under the charter.

We live together in harmony. We love each other, as exemplified by the fact that in most homes, one of the spouses is a francophone. We have seen constant growth; where the population in 1945, when I first went to Orléans, was, as I said, a few hundred souls, it's now over 100,000—I think 107,000, and still growing.

We had a tough fight to keep our Montfort Hospital in the late 1990s, and the—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Orléans, could you sit down for a second? I'd just like to comment that I appreciate the tour of your community; however, we are discussing a consumer-problem bill. If you could stick a little bit to that, I'd appreciate it, because you seem to have gone off track a bit.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thank you, Speaker. I wanted to give you the history of Orléans, so that we knew how a wonderful community developed and how we are so representative of this wonderful province and this country.

We want to let all the people know there are unethical people at their door to sell them high-priced products, that use unethical practices to try to close a sale on a home. I've found real estate agents care for the people

who sell or buy homes and who go out of their way to make sure there is fairness in the market. This bill will bring those who misuse the system closer to ethical business practices.

None of us want too many laws, but our complex societies need laws to protect the more vulnerable. These improvements in protection are a good start. I want to commend the Minister of Consumer Services for bringing in this legislation which is needed. This legislation will protect the people of Orléans, the kids who get into trouble with debt and young couples starting out unaware of the bad business practices that creep into our changing world and fall victim to quasi-criminal predators.

I would like to return to my community of Orléans and to the protection we have as a minority linguistic community. We are the poster child of minority linguistic communities. In Orléans, our minority official language happens to be French. The Official Languages Act is quite clear: The federal government must treat Orléans not only fairly, but more than fairly. So I would like to switch, in talking about my community and this bill, to the other language.

1740

En tant que représentant de la circonscription d'Ottawa-Orléans depuis 10 ans maintenant, je suis très heureux que notre gouvernement travaille à accroître la protection des consommateurs ontariens. Je fais surtout référence à la protection accrue contre la vente à domicile agressive de chauffe-eau. Plusieurs de mes commettants ont d'ailleurs soulevé leurs préoccupations à cet effet.

Le nouveau gouvernement de l'Ontario a lancé donc, le 11 avril dernier, de nouvelles réformes en matière de protection des consommateurs. Nous prenons ainsi des mesures pour offrir une meilleure protection aux consommateurs contre les techniques de vente à domicile agressives et persuasives, plus particulièrement pour la vente de chauffe-eau. Trop souvent, nous avons eu l'indication que certaines entreprises et certains vendeurs avaient recours à des pratiques entreprenantes et douteuses. Il est à noter que le site Internet du ministère des Services aux consommateurs possède une page, « Protégez-vous », afin d'alerter les consommateurs face à la location de chauffe-eau.

Dans le cadre de son plan de protection des consommateurs, la province de l'Ontario prévoit proposer une loi qui, lorsque adoptée, imposera de nouvelles règles pour rendre la vente à domicile plus équitable. Ainsi, nous fournirons des moyens pour aider les consommateurs à faire un choix éclairé et à disposer d'un laps de temps adéquat pour prendre une décision.

Pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns : la période de réflexion relative à l'achat de chauffe-eau doublera et passera donc de 10 jours à 20 jours; aucune livraison ne sera permise avant la fin de la période de réflexion de 20 jours; et de nouvelles protections aux consommateurs seront offertes lorsque les règles ne sont pas suivies.

Ces réformes proposées contribueront à protéger les droits des consommateurs tout en permettant à l'Ontario de tenir son nouvel engagement qui consiste à bâtir une économie solide et à instaurer un marché juste et sûr.

Il est essentiel de protéger les communautés que nous représentons, et cette démarche aidera les consommateurs de ma circonscription, comme tous les Ontariennes et Ontariens à travers la province.

Mais il ne faut pas seulement protéger les consommateurs. Il faut aussi s'assurer de protéger la communauté à laquelle nous appartenons et dans laquelle nous vivons. Trop souvent, nous sommes témoins d'événements ou encore de décisions qui sont prises et qui affectent considérablement notre communauté locale. Notre pays s'est doté de lois afin de protéger les différentes collectivités qui y vivent.

Comme je le mentionnais plus tôt, je représente la merveilleuse communauté d'Ottawa-Orléans depuis 10 ans maintenant. Mais le plus important, c'est que je suis avant tout un résident de cette communauté que je respecte et aime profondément.

Selon le recensement de 2011, Orléans compte quelque 35 000 francophones auxquels s'ajoutent les quelque 65 000 habitants d'autres langues. Cela représente le tiers et les deux tiers de leur population. Ces deux communautés constituent donc une importante part de la population francophone de l'est de l'Ontario et de la région de la capitale nationale. De ces francophones, plusieurs travaillent au sein de la fonction publique fédérale, où le bilinguisme est une exigence requise pour beaucoup d'emplois.

Les francophones qui vivent à Ottawa choisissent de s'installer à l'est d'Ottawa parce qu'ils veulent élever leurs enfants dans un environnement francophone, participer à des événements culturels francophones et recevoir des services dans leur langue maternelle.

La région d'Orléans est certes une tête d'affiche des collectivités bilingues au Canada.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Excuse me. I think you're drifting back in the second language to the description of Orléans again, so if you could keep to the bill, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

**M. Phil McNeely:** Merci, monsieur le Président. C'est vrai que je ne mentionne pas seulement les avantages de la Loi 55 en avant de nous et que je mentionne beaucoup de choses. Mais c'est quelque chose d'important pour moi de parler de ma communauté parce que dans les communautés qui ont bâti, comme Ottawa-Orléans ou comme voisins—on protège eux et l'autre. C'est vraiment une communauté : on travaille ensemble et on vit ensemble.

Now I'll switch back to English on this. I think that the bill that has been brought forward today is an excellent bill that is going to help consumers, protect consumers. It's something that we've been letting go a little bit. As we advance as a country, we seem to be getting more pressures on consumers from fly-by-night operators. We'll be able to take advantage of the new legislation. We'll be able to make sure that we don't meet those people at the door. Those are not the people who should be selling our stuff.

Historically, on the farm—and this goes back to the 1940s and 1950s—we used to have people who came around and painted the barn roof. Sometimes, in the next



rain you lost your paint, or the siding wasn't quite right, or the whitewash that you got in your barn was not quite the right strength. It wasn't as good. You had a lot of people who roamed the countryside preying on people.

It's much the same today. It's a lot more technical. They've got long agreements. You can't read them, you don't understand them, and yet the person is at the door telling you that it's a great deal or that your water tank is going to blow up or something else is going to happen. So this is going in the right direction.

I thought I could talk more about my community in French, but, Mr. Speaker, you certainly were correct in getting me to stop. I'll have to find another Speaker on another day to get that message across.

I thank you very much is for this opportunity. We're getting down to, I think, near the end of this day. Tomorrow is an important day—I can mention the budget. I think it will be an exciting day—every budget is an exciting day here—and exciting times to follow. I thank you very much for the opportunity to talk about my community of Orléans.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I thank the member. Feel free to trick another Speaker.

The member from Mississippi Mills.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** It's my pleasure to comment on this bill. I am a little bit bothered, I must say right off the top, by everybody treating salesmen like they might be unscrupulous, unworthy people who would hurt people. I would like to say that I think most salesmen are good people. They're professionals, they carry out their business with dignity, and they have no intention of hurting people. They do try to deliver the right product to the right person at a fair price.

That's not to say that this legislation isn't worthwhile to protect those who are vulnerable from the few who might be unscrupulous, but the majority are good, worthy people, and in this House we should recognize that.

We should also recognize, I believe, that we can't solve the world's problems with a piece of legislation—not, again, that the legislation isn't good and worthwhile. It's impossible to protect everybody with the papers we produce in this place—with laws. Education is probably the most effective thing we can do—to educate consumers to beware, to look out for themselves and not to sign agreements that might get them something that they don't want.

Having said that, the legislation is good, and we will support that.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Thank you very much for your support.

Debt settlement and door-to-door salespeople will require written agreements. The cooling-off periods and fee limits and controls are all very good. I would say it is a good thing for real estate. It's a little bit different. This gives them the flexibility to charge fees and commissions, which is a practice across the rest of the country in Canada, so I would applaud that.

We will support this bill, Mr. Speaker. We just have to be careful not to paint everybody with a black brush.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** To the member who just spoke from Carleton—Mississippi Mills, we all agree with what you stated in regard to salesmen. Let's not do the same mistake that we normally do and paint the whole industry with a white paintbrush, which I refer to as a syndrome. You're absolutely right.

**1750**

However, you know, there are 3,200 complaints that have come out of this industry, so we really need to look at how we're going to address this.

To the member from Ottawa—Orléans, I'm not sure if I missed your maiden speech, but if today was the attempt at your maiden speech, congratulations. It was really good. I must thank you and appreciate the fact that I know a little bit more about your riding now and the importance, and let me help you out.

Merci beaucoup pour avoir apporté ton adresse initiale pour tes membres. Ça m'a fait bien plaisir d'écouter l'information sur les gens de ta circonscription. Ça me donne une plus grosse connaissance et puis une appréciation, comme vous, comme député qui représente les francophones dans ta région.

Comme vous le savez, moi, je suis une personne qui est vraiment touchée par la langue française. C'est de quoi que j'encourage tous les membres, qu'ils soient anglophones ou francophiles, d'au moins essayer de parler en français dans la Chambre. Ça te donne une grosse crédibilité, même si c'est juste un petit peu. Même pour les autres gens qui essaient d'écouter de temps en temps, on a un beau morceau ici, une belle pièce de technologie qu'on peut mettre dans l'oreille pour vraiment participer à la discussion et pour qu'on puisse apprécier ce que tous les gens, surtout les francophones à travers cette fameuse province, peuvent apporter à la situation.

On est assez chanceux—vraiment, j'ai apprécié les points de vue que tu as apportés, et puis surtout comment les gens dans ta circonscription sont affectés, parce que plusieurs de ces gens-là qui sont des aînés, dans la mienne, ma communauté, sont affectés.

Je t'encourage de continuer à apporter le profil et la situation de tes gens qui sont des aînés dans ta communauté. J'écoute. Merci beaucoup.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

Let me first of all, once again, commend the member from Algoma—Manitoulin for his action last night when, during a reception here, as has already been mentioned earlier today, someone was in extreme difficulty. He performed a Heimlich manoeuvre and saved the individual's life, and for that we can all be thankful.

With respect to the member from Ottawa—Orléans, many of you may not know, but I believe that he's the only professional engineer in the House these days. There used to be another one, the member from Carleton—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Oh, we have another one here. Well, you know, engineers are as welcome here as nurses, teachers, lawyers and—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** With all due respect, I had a tour of Orléans, and now I'm getting a tour of his profession. Thank you very much, but I think we might want to stick to the bill. Thanks.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Thank you very much, Speaker, and thank you for your interventions. They're always so useful in this House.

But the background that he showed of Ottawa–Orléans all speaks to a time when people could totally trust their neighbours and totally trust the people they were dealing with in business in one way or another, and what this bill really deals with is those consumer protection issues that, unfortunately, have become more and more necessary in our society.

The rules and regulations relating to the real estate industry are excellent in this bill. There are excellent real estate agents out there, but there are some people who maybe have not always been playing by the rules. The rules with respect to the water heaters, where there's a cooling-off period from door-to-door salesmen: That's an excellent provision. It is all intended to protect consumers.

So if we all agree on this bill, why don't we just move unanimous consent, give this second reading and send it on to committee so that the people of Ontario can be protected with the provisions of this bill as soon as possible?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** This bill provides three areas of change that we support. To get back on track and remind people in the next two minutes what this is about, there really are three areas.

One is debt settlement, that mandates that all contracts be in writing; sets a cap on the fee that may be charged for debt settlement services; prohibits debt settlers from charging upfront fees; establishes a 10-day cooling-off period, which we've heard so much about, the importance of it; mandates certain disclosures and forbids certain advertising practices; establishes penalties for contravening the act: all good, all important.

Door-to-door sales: doubles the cooling-off period for water heater door-to-door purchases; leaves the door open for other cool-off periods to be doubled; forbids new suppliers from installing a new heater for 20 days; makes a new supplier liable for cancellation charges if heater is installed within 20 days; mandates that all sales be in writing and recorded; and scripted follow-up calls be made to the consumer. Speaker, all good.

Real estate—a very important one: removes the restriction against charging both a fee and a commission for selling or buying a house; mandates that offers for property be made in writing; allows the consumer to inquire with RECO as to whether other offers were made on the property.

In general, the government must ensure legislation creates a safe and trusting business environment, and I genuinely believe that this will accomplish that, which is why I'll support it.

Now, let me tell you a little bit about North Bay, Speaker.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you from the member for Orléans, but that would be my job.

Thanks very much, and your time is up. You can thank him for that.

The member from Orléans has two minutes to respond, and let's hope he sticks to the topic.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Thank you to the members from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, Algoma–Manitoulin, the Attorney General and the member for Nipissing.

I really enjoyed taking you on a bit of a tour of Orléans today and the francophone nature of it.

Je remercie beaucoup le membre d'Algoma–Manitoulin. C'est quelque chose que—je devrais me préparer un peu plus pour parler en français plus souvent. C'est bon de vous entendre aussi parler en français dans la Chambre.

The Attorney General made a good point, that we used to have neighbours we knew, that we knew all our neighbours. Now, you get into the urban setting and maybe down each side of the street you have five, six or seven neighbours whom you know quite well and who are good friends etc. There are nice places to live in our urban centres, but they're a lot different from what we grew up in. So it's important that we help each other, that we get the word out. Don't talk to people at the door who are trying to sell you something. If they've got a good product, they must have a place of business where you can go and get a competitive price from them and have that option.

The bill is very timely. I agree with the Attorney General that it would be nice to get it moving quickly through the Legislature and get it into law so that it does start protecting people. That is what the bill is about.

The most important part right now is the hot water tanks. There may be something else in the future, but I think the important message is: Keep away from dealing at the door. That is not where you're going to get a good deal; that's where you're going to get a good spiel, and that's not going to help you out.

Thank you very much for the opportunity of taking you on the tour of Orléans. I'd like to get a new Speaker in at some time and take you for the tour that I was trying to get at, but that's going to be a challenge for some other time. Thank you, Speaker.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you very much, and I hope you're successful in your bid to find the Speaker you can trick.

It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1758.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO  
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margarett R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margarett R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short



*Continued from back cover*

## **Consumer protection**

Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	1716
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1717

## **Power plants**

Mr. Frank Klees .....	1717
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1717

## **Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1718
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1718

## **Healthy schools**

Ms. Soo Wong .....	1718
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	1718

## **Power plants**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	1719
Hon. John Milloy .....	1719
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1719

## **Ferry service**

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1719
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	1719

## **Visitors**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1720
-------------------------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1720
-------------------------------------	------

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Dairy Farmers of Ontario**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	1720
--------------------------	------

### **Climate change**

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1720
------------------------	------

### **Doctors' Day**

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri .....	1720
-------------------------	------

### **BlackBerry**

Mr. Michael Harris .....	1721
--------------------------	------

### **Automobile insurance**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1721
-------------------------	------

### **Jewish Heritage Month**

Mr. Mike Colle .....	1721
----------------------	------

### **Algonquin Regiment**

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1721
-------------------------	------

### **Seniors' clubs**

Mr. Steven Del Duca .....	1722
---------------------------	------

### **Youth unemployment**

Mr. Randy Hillier .....	1722
-------------------------	------

## **REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

### **Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills**

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1722
Report adopted .....	1722

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Marsh & Co. Hospitality Realty Inc. Act, 2013, Bill Pr10, Ms. Jaczek**

First reading agreed to .....	1722
-------------------------------	------

### **Defending Employees' Rights Act (Certification of Trade Unions), 2013, Bill 62, Mr. Hillier / Loi de 2013 sur la défense des droits des employés (accréditation des syndicats), projet de loi 62, M. Hillier**

First reading agreed to .....	1722
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	1723

### **Labour Relations Amendment Act (Ontario Labour Relations Board), 2013, Bill 63, Mr. Hillier / Loi de 2013 modifiant la Loi sur les relations de travail (Commission des relations de travail de l'Ontario), projet de loi 63, M. Hillier**

First reading agreed to .....	1723
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	1723

### **Defending Employees' Rights Act (Collective Bargaining and Financial Disclosure by Trade Unions), 2013, Bill 64, Mr. Hillier / Loi de 2013 sur la défense des droits des employés (négociation collective et divulgation des renseignements financiers par les syndicats), projet de loi 64, M. Hillier**

First reading agreed to .....	1723
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	1723

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **Ministry of Agriculture and Food / Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation**

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1723
------------------------------	------

### **Sexual Assault Prevention Month / Mois de la prévention de l'agression sexuelle**

Hon. Laurel C. Broten .....	1724
-----------------------------	------

### **Ministry of Agriculture and Food**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	1725
--------------------------	------

### **Sexual Assault Prevention Month**

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	1726
------------------------	------

**Sexual Assault Prevention Month**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo..... 1726

**Ministry of Agriculture and Food / Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation**

Mr. John Vanthof..... 1726

**PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS****Ontario College of Trades**

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson..... 1727

**Mining industry**

Mme France Gélinas..... 1727

**Hospital funding**

Mr. Joe Dickson..... 1727

**Services for the developmentally disabled**

Mr. Ted Arnott..... 1727

**Casinos**

Mr. Peter Tabuns..... 1728

**Agri-food industry**

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn..... 1728

**Tire disposal**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman..... 1728

**Services for the developmentally disabled**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo..... 1729

**Algonquin Memorial Beach**

Mr. Victor Fedeli..... 1729

**Hospital funding**

Ms. Cindy Forster..... 1729

**Ontario College of Trades**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece..... 1729

**Government's record**

Mr. Jim McDonell..... 1730

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR****Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013, Bill 55, Ms. MacCharles / Loi de 2013 renforçant la protection du consommateur ontarien, projet de loi 55, Mme MacCharles**

Mr. Bill Mauro..... 1730

Mr. Rick Nicholls..... 1733

Ms. Catherine Fife..... 1733

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn..... 1734

Mr. Randy Pettapiece..... 1734

Mr. Bill Mauro..... 1734

Mr. John Yakabuski..... 1735

Mr. Michael Mantha..... 1737

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur..... 1738

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson..... 1738

Ms. Sarah Campbell..... 1738

Mr. John Yakabuski..... 1739

Ms. Catherine Fife..... 1739

Mr. Bill Mauro..... 1741

Mr. Rick Nicholls..... 1742

Ms. Cindy Forster..... 1742

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur..... 1742

Ms. Catherine Fife..... 1742

Mr. Phil McNeely..... 1743

Mr. Jack MacLaren..... 1746

Mr. Michael Mantha..... 1746

Hon. John Gerretsen..... 1746

Mr. Victor Fedeli..... 1747

Second reading debate deemed adjourned..... 1747



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 1 May 2013 / Mercredi 1<sup>er</sup> mai 2013

## Wearing of uniform

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1697
------------------------	------

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013, Bill 14, Mrs. Jeffrey / Loi de 2013 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif, projet de loi 14, Mme Jeffrey

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1697
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1698
Mrs. Laura Albanese.....	1698
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1698
Miss Monique Taylor.....	1699
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1699
Mr. Monte McNaughton.....	1699
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1701
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	1701
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	1701
Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1701
Mr. Monte McNaughton.....	1701
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1702
Mr. Michael Mantha.....	1703
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	1703
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	1703
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1703
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1704
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	1704
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1705
Hon. Tracy MacCharles.....	1705
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1706
Mr. Michael Mantha.....	1706
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	1706
Mr. Todd Smith.....	1706
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	1708

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1708
Mr. John Vanthof.....	1708
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1708
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	1708
Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	1708
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	1708
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	1708

Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	1708
Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1708
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	1708
Mr. Steve Clark.....	1708
Mr. Randy Pettapiece.....	1708
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	1708
Mr. Shafiq Qaadri.....	1708
Mme France Gélinas.....	1708

## Public gallery

Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	1708
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1709

## Member for Algoma-Manitoulin

Ms. Cindy Forster.....	1709
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1709

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Power plants

Mr. Tim Hudak.....	1709
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1709

### Power plants

Mr. Tim Hudak.....	1710
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1710

### Power plants

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1711
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1711

### Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1712
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1712

### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1713
Hon. Bob Chiarelli.....	1713

### Power plants

Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1714
Hon. John Milloy.....	1714

### Doctors

Mr. Joe Dickson.....	1714
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	1715

### Power plants

Mr. John Yakabuski.....	1715
Hon. John Milloy.....	1715

### Workplace safety

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1716
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	1716

*Continued on inside back cover*



No. 35

N° 35

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

# **Official Report of Debates (Hansard)**

# **Journal des débats (Hansard)**

**Thursday 2 May 2013**

**Jeudi 2 mai 2013**



**Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac**

**Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac**

**Clerk  
Deborah Deller**

**Greffière  
Deborah Deller**



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 2 May 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 2 mai 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

LOCAL FOOD ACT, 2013

LOI DE 2013 SUR

LES ALIMENTS LOCAUX

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 29, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 36, An Act to enact the Local Food Act, 2013 /  
Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant la Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm very pleased to pick up where I left off on Monday, because while the Local Food Act, at the surface level, seems to have a lot of fruit to bear, unfortunately, as I said on Monday, it's a very, very shallow bill.

I can't help but reflect on some of the comments that the Minister of Agriculture and Food shared in her opening comments. There was one particular phrase. She asked a question: "How do we best increase demand for and access to local food across the province?" Well, ladies and gentlemen of the House, I suggest to you that the minister has reflected upon how she wants to have respectful conversations. Well, she needs to start engaging with our agri-food stakeholders because what she's proposed in this particular act just isn't going to cut it. If she actually had respectful conversation with agri-food stakeholders, she would learn that less regulation, more research, better support and a focus on how to minimize cost to production is what our stakeholders are really looking for.

When I talk about less regulation, I think of Gerhard Metzger; he's got a wonderful abattoir business. I was just speaking to him Monday morning and he was reflecting on the fact that with the burden of regulation, it's getting harder and harder to make a viable business. Further to that, he actually recognized the lack of skilled trades as an issue as well. He doesn't want someone just to come into his operation and cut meat; he wants someone to come in and be educated and have an appreciation for food science. We've talked about that in our white paper, the PC white paper called Respect for Rural On-

tario. We need jobs in our agri-food industry and we need a system that promotes that so that we can develop local foods and embrace what there is to offer in that regard.

In terms of more research—you know, some of you might crack a smile when I talk about this, but in her comments, again, the Minister of Agriculture spoke to the fact that they want to be responsive to foods—"from ethnically diverse foods to foods that address special dietary needs like nut-free and gluten-free." If she was listening to the Grain Farmers of Ontario, she'd come to realize that research is needed. The Grain Farmers of Ontario have been consistently asking for dollars with regard to a seed breeder. Some of you might smile when I say that, but we need research to determine how we can develop the gluten-free grains so that we can address the local foods that our new populations require.

In terms of better support and cost of production, on Monday morning as well—I thought it was rather ironic—I received two emails from folks from home. One was Heather Ritzema. She sent an email because she's worrying about running her dairy operation—her dairy farm—while enduring skyrocketing electricity costs that ultimately come back to each and every consumer of milk in this province. If we can't get our cost of production under control, then our products are going to go up in price and people won't be able to afford to buy local food.

I also got an email from Jason Emke, from District 2, OSMA—Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency. He was sharing his stress over the fact that Ontario sheep producers have fewer vaccines, while Australia, New Zealand, the US and now the UK are all exporting lamb into Ontario and they have many drugs available for use that are not available for Ontario flocks. These countries have many different dewormers—combination drenches—that put us, in Ontario, at a great disadvantage.

So we have to take a look at how we can best position our farmers in Ontario to produce, in a cost-effective manner, the most effective, good-quality local foods we can.

I'd also like to focus on comments that the Minister of Agriculture and Food shared with regard to the need to increase education and awareness. You know, it kind of made me scratch my head a little bit, because I really wonder how well the Minister of Agriculture and Food knows her file. It's a flag for me, and I'm concerned about it.

I used to work for OMAFRA. Yesterday, we heard the minister recognize the 125th anniversary of OMAF. There was a body within OMAF: Ontario Agri-food Edu-



cation. It was agriculture in the classroom, traditionally. That program was managed by a couple of wonderful ladies; Marjorie McDonald comes to mind, Joyce Canning.

Then, in the spirit of recognizing a need and getting government out of the way so an organization could grow and excel, OAFE spun into a not-for-profit organization that provides great support for agriculture in-classroom initiatives. OAFE is all about developing curriculum-based resources that articulate a clear agri-food message.

Ernie Hardeman and I will be travelling there later today. We've embraced this in our white paper, and I hope the government does as well. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you, Speaker. Once again, a great opportunity to talk about agriculture and the introduction of this rather—I'd agree with the member from Huron—Bruce on a few issues on this very shallow bill. It is a very, very shallow bill.

One comment I'd like to bring forward in this House is that last night, at the Dairy Farmers of Ontario reception, the Minister of Agriculture, the Premier, acknowledged—she said there are a lot of things we can do to make this bill better. I think we should take this opportunity to actually make this bill into something that agriculture and people all over the province can be proud of and can benefit from.

A few of the things: We need a real, honest discussion about where Local Food Week should be placed in the year. It shouldn't just be, "Oh, we decided to put it here, and we're going to bump somebody else. So we're going to go over another—we're going to go over Agriculture Week." That's one thing we've got to change.

We need, in this act, especially for small processors who are the backbone, along with farmers—but small processors are actually the backbone of local food—some kind of framework within this act that's actually going to show how we can make regulation make sense for small processors. That has to be included in this act.

We need food literacy included in this act. We need a framework on how we're actually going to improve access to local food; how we're actually going to do it. We need to set those goals and objectives, not three years after we pass the law, Mr. Speaker; we need to set the goals and objectives, and especially the framework on how those goals and objectives are going to be set—before or while the act is passed into law, not three years after. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you, Speaker. I'll be brief; I understand we have spent about 18 hours on this debate. I just want to say it was great to talk about the Local Food Act last week at Allan's Your Independent Grocer in my wonderful riding of Pickering-Scarborough East, where they're very receptive to this week and they look forward to speedy passage to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**0910**

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'm very pleased to stand and pay respect to the member from Huron—Bruce, because she does bring a lot to the argument—or the discussion, I should say—about agriculture, as her working history and her life are basically entwined with agriculture. In fact, an interesting remark is that she defeated, as someone would know, the Minister of Agriculture in the last election. So I give her credit for having great traction and great respect in her riding.

But more importantly, this bill—I think in her remarks she said it's a lot to do about nothing. It actually doesn't do anything, unfortunately, where in fact the suggestions that she brought to the table do suggest things that we could do to improve the plight of agriculture in Ontario.

There's another sad point to this bill. It actually attempts to expunge from the public record the great work done by the member from Perth—Middlesex, I think, Bert Johnson. Now, Bert Johnson brought in Agriculture Week; I believe it was in 1998.

This bill seems to try to superimpose on that this whole ideal of feeling good about the Local Food Act. Really, what I think is important is to pay respect for agriculture. They grow the food that we eat. Get to know a farmer. Visit a local garden. Visit a local market. You'll see the great work that's being done, not just in the GTA, but across Ontario. Our member brings that. Huron—Bruce is another area widely respected for agriculture, not unlike my riding of Durham, which I'll be speaking about. I hope to have an hour this morning to speak about my riding of Durham and the great leadership in agriculture there.

The member from Huron—Bruce, as I said, knows what she's talking about, has a lot to offer, and I commend her remarks to everyone's attention.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'm pleased to stand again and speak to the Local Food Act, which we're speaking about this morning. Speaker, as members around this chamber have said, this is a good idea. It's a good to talk about food. It's a good idea to talk about local food. Unfortunately, we're not very specific about what we mean by "local food." That's something that should be in this bill. It should talk about how far your food is travelling. Is your food local if it travels from Toronto to Kenora? Is that local? Are there different definitions here? How is your food grown? As my colleagues have said, there is so little in this bill. It's unfortunate that we have a debate literally about nothing. So it is inspiring to some of us that we should be talking about this, but the debate's not happening here.

My colleague from Timiskaming—Cochrane was speaking about the importance of doing food literacy in schools. This is so common sense. This is something that we should be debating here. How are we going to do this? There is so much opportunity for this to happen. Unfortunately, this debate is not happening in these chambers about how we could do that.

There are people who are inspired around the province. Sustain Ontario is asking schools in Ontario to report out—have students report out about how they're using food in innovative ways. They want to know about student nutrition programs. They want to hear about cafeterias and culinary arts programs. But, Speaker, there's not enough support from this government to help those programs happen. So I'm afraid that those reports are not as exciting as they could be if we actually had a government that would work with communities, work with our school system, work with students who want to bring food into their schools and do this work.

Clearly, we're going to pass this on to committee. I hope at that point civil society will come in and make some of their recommendations to this government. But I hope, too, that the government is listening. It's unfortunate that we don't have more to talk about in these chambers about what could be done when it comes to local food in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Huron—Bruce, you have two minutes for a reply.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I certainly appreciate everyone's remarks. To the member for Davenport, the member for Durham, the Minister of Consumer Services and the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane, I'm glad we're all on the same page. We have to do more with regard to this particular bill. I really look forward to seeing it go into committee. I'm hopeful that all three parties certainly recognize the value of the amendment that has been put forward by our agriculture critic, Ernie Hardeman, and our education critic, Lisa MacLeod. Food literacy is really, really important, but I have to stress to you that this is not new.

Agriculture in the classroom has been around for some time. Prior to coming to this wonderful House on October 6, 2011, I'm very proud to say I was vice-chair of Ontario Agri-Food Education. I just want to give a shout-out to them, because in case the Minister of Agriculture and Food or the rest of the people in the House aren't familiar with what they do, I want to share that OAFE has reached over and provided over 43,000 agri-food educational resources to classrooms. OAFE is sponsored by all the commodity organizations throughout Ontario, as well as a number of financial institutions and individuals. OAFE also reached more than 16,000 teachers who in turn reached out to more than 326,000 students in 2010 alone. They're great partners in huge traditional rural activities that we embrace, much like the granddaddy of all fairs, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, and the International Plowing Match, with which the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane became very familiar as he managed the education tent there. I really appreciated the efforts he put forward there.

But in the end, ladies and gentlemen, the Local Food Act needs so much more work. Our agri-food industry deserves respect and we need to really get this into committee to give that. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'm pleased to participate in this morning's debate about Bill 36, the Local Food Act, 2013. It's yet another bill that has been revived by the Liberals after their similar legislation, Bill 130, died with prorogation. Remember that period where they took off for four months and for an unprecedented occasion closed this House down? Now they go out and tell all the interest groups that we're holding up legislation when they actually closed the place, but anyway, that's being Liberal. I think it's important to note that this bill, as I said, could have been enacted into law.

In regard to Bill 36, I'm very supportive of the concept of a Local Food Act. Farming and agriculture is a rich part of our history and the history of my riding. That not only fuels growth and job creation but contributes significantly to our local, provincial and federal economies. In Ontario, the farm sector contributes close to \$3.5 billion in tax revenues, it generates over \$7 billion in salaries and wages, and it has created over 165,000 jobs and makes up roughly 13% of Ontario's gross domestic product. So I think we can all agree it's a very, very important industry.

While I agree with the premise of supporting local food—who wouldn't?—in terms of the health benefits, the economic benefits and the common sense of it all, there are some weaknesses to this particular Liberal bill that have not only been brought forward by the opposition parties but by various stakeholders that I want to briefly discuss here today.

One concern for us is the loss of Ontario Agriculture Week, to be replaced with a Local Food Week. As was said earlier by my colleague from Durham, Ontario Agriculture Week was brought forward by a former colleague, Bert Johnson from Perth, and it's been a huge success since he brought that forward in the 1990s. Now the Liberals somehow want to discard that and replace it with Local Food Week.

Agriculture Week has always served to underscore how much we continue to rely on agriculture and the products made by the agricultural industry in our daily lives. It has always been a week we could reserve to pay tribute to the entire Ontario agricultural industry and all those who work within it. This includes everyone from sod and potato farmers in New Tecumseth in my riding, corn and cabbage producers in Clearview, and apple growers in Clarksburg, to name just a few. They all deserve this special recognition and grateful acknowledgement and are why we do not want this important week replaced.

If anything, we believe Ontario Agriculture Week and Local Food Week should be separate weeks to allow us to recognize both the contributions of our farmers and the importance of local food, including the many people and organizations involved in Ontario's food system.

The second weakness of this legislation is how little it actually does much of anything, as my colleague Lisa Thompson indicated in her remarks. It has a great name, it sounds great, but if you look to the meat and bones of the bill, there's very little substance. In a CBC radio interview last October, the former Minister of Agriculture,



Food and Rural Affairs, Ted McMeekin, even had a hard time explaining the purpose of this bill. The announcer repeatedly asked him about the targets and goals of the act, to which Mr. McMeekin had no reply except to say basically that the act would allow for further discussions to eventually establish goals and targets to “aspire” to in respect of local food. I mean, come on, do we really need an act in the Ontario Legislature to do that? This is common sense stuff here.

0920

For a Premier who prides herself on her devotion to rural and agricultural issues, her reintroduction of this bill is an insult. For this to be the first bill—and so far the only bill—for her to introduce to address the issues that plague the agricultural community, it’s certainly clear that our part-time Minister of Agriculture is falling short of her responsibilities.

Stakeholders and the PC caucus have put forward a number of proposals that would have strengthened our food system, increased access to local food and helped our agriculture sector. But instead of listening, the government has chosen to ignore these initiatives and reintroduce the same weak legislation as they did last fall that doesn’t do much of anything.

In a letter to the Premier dated March 28, 2013, stakeholder groups outlined their concern with the shortcomings of this legislation. The letter was signed by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, FoodShare, Sustainable Food Production, Sustain Ontario, Food Forward, Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association, Ontario farm fresh, the Organic Council of Ontario, Holland Marsh Growers’ Association, Toronto Food Policy Council and Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation.

Let me read a couple of highlights from this letter, as the Premier has seemed to neglect to read it herself:

“Premier, we also feel the Local Food Act can and should do more than promote awareness and strive to improve procurement. We believe the key to really accomplishing the goals of stronger food systems in Ontario lies in improving the basic food literacy for all Ontarians. In the short term this means food awareness programs including nutrition and food preparation programming. A longer term investment includes a strong food literacy component in our school curriculum. We go as far as to suggest hands-on food skills training in our school system.”

It continues: “Likewise, a Local Food Act should also address the very fundamental issue of food access—the ability of all Ontarians to procure nutritious and culturally acceptable food at all times....”

“Premier, we hope that you will also extend the focus of Bill 36 to encompass regional economic development opportunities. A well-crafted Local Food Act will help strengthen Ontario’s food and agricultural sector, resulting in social and economic benefits for communities all across Ontario....”

“Finally, we feel that it is important to emphasize that Bill 36 can realize several environmental goals. We aspire to have a Local Food Act that would include meas-

ures to further incent producers and processors towards environmentally sustainable practices.”

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that many of these suggested reforms are also the reforms we suggest in our PC white paper entitled *Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario*, which is on the Ontario PC website. I would encourage the Premier to have a look at that discussion paper.

Also I would note that just a few days ago our critic for agriculture and food, Mr. Ernie Hardeman, from Oxford, and our education critic, Lisa MacLeod, from Nepean—Carleton, announced that when this bill gets to committee—which it will soon—we’ll be putting forward an amendment to do exactly what the people asked for in the letter I just read, in bringing in food literacy in the curriculum in our schools.

A third concern with this bill is its failure to address the various challenges Ontario’s food system and agriculture sector is facing. The impact of red tape, hydro rates and the latest tire tax are some of the issues that need to be addressed, and in most cases are due to policies that need to be reversed.

The number one problem PCs found during a thorough consultation process with farmers, food processors and agribusinesses was red tape and the unnecessary regulatory burden forced on the sector. Of those surveyed, 77% of farmers, 76% of food processors and 86% of agribusinesses reported that needless paperwork is hindering their operations.

In my riding, Miller’s Dairy in Creemore provides an example. Their on-farm milk processing plant was delayed by various government regulations, including the requirement to build a receiving bay for milk trucks to transport unpasteurized milk. On-farm milk processing means milk is pasteurized on-farm and that both a milk truck and receiving bay aren’t needed. Mr. Speaker, I had to intervene personally in this thing; it was the stupidest thing in the world.

They wanted them to build a very, very expensive truck cleaning station, a truck receiving station and other facilities to deal with trucks. Well, there are no trucks moving milk on Miller’s farm, but it took us months to explain to the bureaucrats—because they had these regulations they had to stick to—that we’re going to put a pipe from one barn where the cows are milked; the milk will go into a holding tank and then that pipe will take it over to the next barn, where it will be pasteurized and bottled. There are no trucks. But that was a very strange concept for them. They couldn’t understand that a four-inch pipe would replace trucks.

Yet the government at that time—the Minister of Agriculture was running around saying, “We need more on-farm processing and value-added on the farm,” and “Sell it at the farm gate.” Here we were doing exactly that in Creemore at Miller’s Dairy. I am happy to report that they are up and running, and they are selling wonderful milk products in our local stores in the riding and just outside of the riding. Of course, their milk is featured on many restaurant menus.

There's also an example I have of local food. I've got a bistro in Alliston called Bistro Burger Joint. The owner-chef is Jay Klausen. He has recently been told that he has to take the word "local"—he has two restaurants in town, and he tries to source local. Well, because he has been buying his carrots from Holland Marsh, over 30 kilometres away, he can no longer call his food "local" because of federal red tape. So, I think the minister, rather than this food act, should be dealing with the federal government and getting rid of that piece of red tape. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you, Speaker, once again. It's an honour to be able to stand and talk about the Local Food Act.

I think the member from Simcoe–Grey brought up some very good points. Specifically, I'd like to spend a minute on the on-farm processor of milk he has in his riding, Miller's farms. It's a prime example of where there has to be something in the Local Food Act, some kind of framework, where the regulation makes sense for the size of the processor and for the individual conditions of the processor. A truck-washing station for a dairy that gets bulk milk trucks is a necessity. It has to be a regulation. How much hot water? How much pressure? Those things all have to be in the regulation, because that keeps people safe. But that regulation, quite frankly, does not fit for an on-farm processor. An on-farm processor needs different rules to make sure that it's safe. They're not the same. If you want to promote more local food processors, if you actually want to protect the local food processors that are here now, we have to have some kind of framework, a definite legislative framework that's talked about in this House, to make sense for those processors. He brings up a very, very good point.

I also listened to the interview from the previous minister. In fact, the bill has changed somewhat. It's being brought forward now by the new minister—but actually it's being made worse. Moving Agriculture Week—trying to supplant or moving Local Food Week on top of Agriculture Week isn't an improvement. Having goals and objectives to be set three years from now is not an improvement.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** We have, by my count, now debated this bill for 18 hours and 30 minutes. I think it's time that we get this bill to the committee so that we can hear from farmers, so we can hear from communities like mine in Ottawa Centre, and get this bill passed into law. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I want to use my time to reflect on the matter that has been raised by a number of speakers, and that's the idea of imposing Local Food Week on top of Ontario agricultural week. In my view, it's a demonstration of the lack of understanding—it may be an urban focus—but the notion that these are the same two things.

Ontario Agriculture Week was and is an opportunity not only to have a harvest celebration, but also to recognize the complexity—that's why it's called Agriculture Week—the secondary products that are created, the value-added through keeping processing in our communities and the issue around abattoirs. All of these things go up or make up the economy of agriculture and its contribution to Ontario. When you look at Local Food Week, not only as a set-aside time but also as part of this bill, this is an urban focus.

0930

There's more to eating that goes on in agriculture. Obviously, that's the most important part of agriculture, but there's an entire area that is ignored by suggesting it can be replaced by Local Food Week. I would argue that the best time to do it is actually at planting time. If we were to have the week set aside at the time when people are working, in some cases 24 hours a day, to get planting done, maybe there'd be a greater appreciation of the risks between planting and harvesting. Now, that is a local food issue.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Again, I rise to speak to this bill, and it's with great pleasure. With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker—if I stray away, I'm sure you're going to bring me back around—my focus this morning won't be on urban or rural; it's going to be specifically on Manitoulin Island.

Manitoulin Island has farmers like Linda, Ted, Max and Glenn, who are thriving on Manitoulin Island, bringing their businesses to fruition. They're counting on the season to start, and they're looking forward to it. Businesses owned by Alain, France, Richard, Sue and Garry are just waiting for those people to come into their businesses and their restaurants, as are the farmers—bed and breakfasts, gift shops, hotels, jobs, the farmers' market. The farmers' markets measure their success based on the amount of tourism that comes to the island.

But you know what the problem is? The Chi-Chemaun ain't going to run this year because it's late. These people's lives are being put in danger because this government is not going into action to help them. What they're doing is they're throwing the hot potato back to the federal government, telling them, "It's your fault; it's your responsibility." They're throwing it back: "Well, we got a legal opinion. It's your responsibility. You deal with it." And they're throwing it back: "Well, we're doing everything we can. Let's have a chat about it."

Let's stop having a chat. These lives are really being put in danger. I'm always going to continue to come into this House and talk about the people of Algoma–Manitoulin. Their lives are really being put in danger by the inaction that is happening by this government.

We really need to promote a food act. Let me tone it down here. It is a good thing. But I will always speak on behalf of the people of Algoma–Manitoulin and about the inaction of this government to help them. Stop passing the hot potato; get to the pot. Get the deal done for these people so that they can promote their Local Food Act.



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Simcoe–Grey, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I want to just start by congratulating the member for Algoma–Manitoulin for his passion. It's absolutely ridiculous. I used to be a northern minister, so I've travelled the Chi-Cheemaun many, many times over many, many years. Of course, my riding's not too far away. The Great Lakes level is a horrific problem that nobody seems to be doing much about. I see the International Joint Commission is actually starting to order governments to do something now, in a report last Friday, but that will take many, many years.

The Chi-Cheemaun needs an adjustment to its fenders—how difficult can that be?—so that people can get access to the island and indeed enjoy it. There are some wonderful restaurants, and there's a wonderful inn over there and lots of great spots. Maybe they could enjoy local food if they could only get it over to the island. Maybe they'll have to canoe it over, Mr. Speaker; it's back to the Dark Ages. It's something that their government should stop fighting about. It's about \$100,000 in repairs. The Owen Sound Transportation Commission can't afford to do that themselves, so it will take government intervention. Certainly people do deserve that.

So congratulations to the member from Algoma–Manitoulin. I hope, no matter what the topic is today and for the rest of the time that's needed to get the government to respond, that he does take that time.

I just want to give another plug for an amendment that we're bringing forward to the Local Food Act. Mr. Hardeman, our agriculture critic, the member for Oxford, and Lisa MacLeod, our education critic, the member from Nepean–Carleton—food literacy. We believe it's an essential part of any food act because it's vital that our children have knowledge of healthy food and understand where it comes from. There's an astounding statistic that we received from the Farmers Feed Cities organization. It found that only 41% of 18- to 34-year-olds said they knew where their food comes from. That's astounding and it's embarrassing, and it needs to change. Hopefully, this act, when properly amended, will do something to change that rather low statistic, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'm pleased to participate in this debate on Bill 36. I will start off by saying that I would propose an amendment to the title of the bill, given its content. The real title of this bill, if there's to be truth in politics here, should be as follows: an act that perpetuates public cynicism about government and its disrespect for agriculture in Ontario.

The reason that I say that is because anyone who would review this bill would realize that it does nothing. Our critic Mr. Hardeman, who spoke to this bill, was very articulate in pointing out that anything—anything—that this bill is proposing to do by legislation can be done today without legislation, without regulation. The only thing that is required in this bill that needs legislation is the very cynical motion to do away with Agriculture Week. That, I think, is most disrespectful.

I would hope that it is perhaps because the Premier, who is now the Minister of Agriculture, simply wasn't aware of the fact that our former colleague in this House brought forward legislation that has been celebrated, that has been honoured, throughout Ontario for the last number of years as Agriculture Week. That celebrates agriculture from the farm to the table, and it honours the work that farmers do every day. It honours their contribution to our economy. It respects an industry that is making a major contribution to this province but, sadly, is certainly not being recognized by this government. As the Premier goes through her apprenticeship in agriculture, hopefully, she will take the time to recognize that this bill, in many respects, is actually an insult to the industry.

We've heard many recommendations coming forward that will no doubt be made more substantively at committee. There is an opportunity to make some substantial changes—amendments—to this bill that will actually be meaningful. Certainly, we will, as the PC caucus, be bringing forward a number of amendments. I know the third party will as well, and, hopefully, members of the government.

Hopefully, the minister herself, the Premier, will at least take the time to read the Hansard of the remarks that are being made and will participate in those committee hearings. Speaker, as she appeared at the committee investigating the power plants scandal, we would hope that she would make herself equally as available to participate in the committee hearings that deal with this bill.

I'm proud to represent the riding of Newmarket–Aurora. Over the course of the last 18 years, I've now represented three separate ridings in York region due to redistribution, ranging from Oak Ridges, which included the very rich farmland of Stouffville as well as the northern part of Markham. People don't perhaps realize that there is still some very rich farmland encompassed by the urban boundaries of Markham.

I represented the riding of York–Mackenzie. I was the first and last member to represent York–Mackenzie. That included the township of King.

**0940**

Today I represent Newmarket–Aurora. While there is little farmland left there, I can tell you that we're very proud of York region, which today has 972 farms comprising some 67,000 hectares of land. In York region alone we contribute some \$147.2 million in farm cash receipts; 24,730 jobs throughout York region are supported by agriculture.

Speaker, I know that my colleague Ms. Munro has mentioned in the past the Holland Marsh as Ontario's food basket. The Holland Marsh produces 95% of Ontario's celery, 66% of its onions, 80% of its carrots, 90% of its Asian vegetables—still very rich farmland. While that land is under attack, I also want to go on record, and I'm very proud of the fact, that it was the PC government and myself and my colleagues in the PC caucus who advocated for the Oak Ridges moraine legislation, which, as we know, when it was implemented, protected perma-

nently literally thousands of acres of land across the Oak Ridges moraine from development for generations to come, a proud accomplishment. It's for that reason that we continue to stand with those in agriculture who are making such an incredible contribution to our province.

I want to take this opportunity to make reference to the fact that in Aurora as well as in Newmarket we have a farmers' market that I have the opportunity to attend from time to time. The farmers' market in Aurora actually opens up this Saturday. From 8 o'clock until 1 o'clock every Saturday through to October, people can purchase locally grown produce. There are bakery items and meats, meat products and preserves and crafts, and I invite people to attend that. It's located on Wells Street at Metcalfe in downtown Aurora.

Newmarket, as well, opens their farmers' market this weekend. It also runs from 8 o'clock until 1 o'clock in the afternoon. It's located at Riverwalk Commons, which is at Doug Duncan Drive and Timothy Street—again, locally grown produce and meat products. And when we talk about encouraging locally grown food products, there's no better place to enjoy that than in our local farm markets.

Speaker, I've made my comments about this bill. I'm not going to speak any more about it because, quite frankly, there is little to say. The only action words in this legislation are "review," "set targets," "consult." It does nothing. But I can tell you what we will be making our amendments based on. The PC caucus has published our discussion document on agricultural policy. It is entitled *Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario* and it makes this commitment, Speaker. I will quote from the document: "We would introduce a comprehensive Ontario food act that would support local procurement and help our farmers, food processors and agribusinesses by reducing red tape and supporting Ontario's food system. To have an impact, the legislation needs to address our entire food system from field to fork and contain real, meaningful changes. This act would also include our proposals for a dedicated fund for the Risk Management Program and the one-window access to government for farmers and agribusinesses."

Speaker, what we need in this province is real action. What we need is a substantive approach to ensuring that our agricultural industry cannot only survive but that it can prosper. Unfortunately the bill that we have before us does none of that. In fact, as I indicated, I really do believe that it shows a great deal of disrespect for this industry. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I think the member from Newmarket—Aurora began his comments by talking about the cynicism that these kinds of bills breed. I want to welcome members in the gallery. If you haven't caught on to what's going on here, we're debating the Local Food Act. I've been here for about a year and a half, so I've been learning on the job, and what I see the government continue to do is put out bills with nice names—people in

my community absolutely support local food; this is something that we want—but the name of the bill actually doesn't change the way things happen in Ontario. Just naming a bill something—we all know that's not how things work.

So we've had a government here that had a bill about supporting seniors, and it did nothing to actually support seniors. But they can now go into an election at some point and say, "We passed a bill to support seniors, and we passed a bill to support local food."

We spent months here talking about bullying in the province, which is a huge concern for people—clearly everyone's against bullying—but the net result was anti-bullying week. In my experience this has not actually stopped bullying in my community or in Ontario, and neither will just naming a week in October "Local Food Week." Will that actually create sustainable food systems in Ontario? It's good politics; it's poor policy.

I was happy to hear the member from Simcoe—Grey, however, talk about the support from the Conservatives for food literacy in schools. That is something that's really important. It's something we could do. I hope that they'll actually provide resources for this stuff, too, because just saying "food literacy" isn't actually going to create food literacy.

We know the cost of poor health and of poor nutrition in Ontario. We all pay for it with our tax dollars. Nobody wants to waste taxpayer money, but we're wasting it when we don't do the upfront investment to make sure that people have access to good food. We could do this through this bill. We could actually support schools to have good food in their schools.

I hope that all parties will work on this and actually make the necessary investments to make this a healthier province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** This debate on second reading of this bill is deep into the law of diminishing returns. I think it would be far more productive to hear this debate in committee where we can hear from additional witnesses.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I actually agree with the member across and what he just said. The problem is there's nothing in this bill to debate in committee. That's the whole thing. There's nothing there.

I do agree with all the comments from the member from Newmarket—Aurora—

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** What about me?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** And you, sir; I do agree with that. Thank you.

Anyways, I guess the issue that I have with this whole act—I've heard this from my farmer friends in Perth—Wellington—and why it's brought out words like "aspire" and things like that, is that their job is very difficult. They have a lot to look after; they have a lot to



read, but unfortunately a part-time minister can't do the job that we think they should be doing.

Agriculture in Ontario is the second-largest industry in Ontario. All the jobs, all the economics it puts back into this province, and we have a part-time agriculture minister. Well, she can't keep up with it. It just doesn't work. We need a full-time agriculture minister in this province. We've always had one, and we should have one right now.

I'm also very disappointed that they would choose a date to replace Agriculture Week, which is the week leading up to Thanksgiving, which was passed under the leadership of a former MPP from my riding, Bert Johnson. That's disappointing. It shouldn't be there, and in committee we need to change that.

I just want to point out, I remember when I was growing up on a dairy farm, if my father had said at 6 o'clock in the morning, "Would you aspire to go out there and milk those cows? Would you go do that?" I probably wouldn't have gotten out of bed—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Inspirational, Randy. Inspirational.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** "Aspire" is not inspirational. But anyways, I'll end my comments there.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, to speak on the Local Food Act, I agree with a lot of the comments made from all sides. One thing I take exception to is the comments from the member from Mississauga—Streetsville, because, regardless, it is never a waste of the Legislature's time to talk about the number one industry in this province. The waste of the Legislature's time was bringing forward this act last fall, having it be universally criticized for being completely vague—nice title, little else. Change minister, change leader; come back: leader, minister same person, and come back with not a better act but a worse one. That is a waste of time.

0950

I'm very proud to be able to stand here on behalf of my NDP colleagues, on behalf of the farmers, farm families, small processors, big processors, and talk about the number one industry in Ontario. It was number one 125 years ago we found out yesterday, and it's number one today. That's why someone in the ministry should have spent a lot more time looking at this Local Food Act when they brought it forward the second time, and said, "Gee, you know, we could maybe make this better. We could actually be discussing a real—a meat-and-potatoes act here before—

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Or healthy vegetables.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** —and vegetables, for Davenport—before it goes to committee. That would have made the committee's job easier. That would have made this Legislature actually work, instead of proposing a press release and trying to get it to committee and make the government look good. Let's actually make laws in this province that help the people of this province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Newmarket—Aurora, you have two minutes.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** In my two minutes, I want to do two things. First of all, I want people who are watching this debate to know why members of the government want debate to stop. It's because they're embarrassed by it. That's why. They know full well that the bill we're debating is an insult to the agricultural community, and they don't want to hear any more about it. So we will debate until we are cut off. I know, Speaker, you won't do that to me. You'll at least give me the balance of my two minutes.

In our policy document, *Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario*, there are some numbers. I want to put those on the record. The first one is 51,950; that is the number of farms in Ontario. The next one is 164,400; that is the number of Ontario jobs that are generated by the farming sector in this province—13% is the value of the rural economy to Ontario's gross domestic product; \$7 billion is the value of the wages and salaries tied to Ontario's agricultural industry; \$3.4 billion is the Ontario farm sector's contribution to federal and provincial taxes.

Over 30—that is the number of pieces of provincial legislation that are governing Ontario agriculture; 386,251 is the number of provincial regulations on the books in Ontario that are affecting the agricultural industry; 154 is the hours spent by the average farmer filling out government forms; \$11 billion is the cost to business to comply with Ontario's regulatory burden.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I believe that says it all.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you very much. Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's very difficult to follow the member from Newmarket—Aurora. He makes eminently good sense in all things he speaks about, specifically the statistics he cited. I have checked them out; they may not be accurate.

But anyway, the fact is this—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** On a point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member for Newmarket—Aurora.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I would ask you to call the member to order—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Frank Klees:** —disparaging remark to an honourable member. He should know better. I'm expecting an apology.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Durham, it's your colleague.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Mr. Speaker, I'm so stressed out this morning with that remark by the member from Durham that he should apologize immediately. Mr. Klees is a very honourable member, a member of integrity and is always known to have a lot of good statistics at his fingertips. I would never want his reputation sullied on this particular

matter. So I'd ask the member from Durham to apologize immediately and get on with what I anticipate will be a fine—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you for your comment. That's not a point of order, but I leave it up to the member from Durham to do the right thing.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I think it draws to the point of discussion here: that some of the statistics are simply unbelievable. In that respect, it's the amount of disrespect that is burdened on farmers today and agriculture generally. I can't believe that—what he said—there was a total of \$3.4 billion in tax, and yet this bill pays little deference to the important contribution agriculture makes to Ontario.

In fact, for those viewing or listening today, I think it's important to read what the bill is intended to do. I'm actually reading from the bill. It's a couple of pages. There's really very little in it. Here's the explanatory note:

“1. The week beginning on the Monday before Thanksgiving Day in each year is proclaimed as Local Food Week.

“2. The Minister of Agriculture and Food may establish goals or targets to aspire to in respect of local food.” Think of the soft, mushy words there: “may,” “aspire to.” “The minister must engage in consultation....” That means travel around Ontario. “The minister may direct a public sector organization to provide information....”

There are no objectives, no measurable goals nor measurable outcomes. This is a shame and an embarrassment, and that's in that context, Mr. Speaker, that I meant to the member from Newmarket-Aurora. He has put on the record the contribution that agriculture makes in Ontario, and I think that's the point he was making, and it's the point I'm commenting on.

My riding is made up of three large communities: Uxbridge, Scugog and Clarington. Within each one of those communities, there are many agricultural communities—tier 1 communities—that I think make Ontario the strong base that it is today.

I've had the privilege of serving in that area for about 30 years—about 18 here, and prior to that as a municipal councillor. I have great respect for the leadership in agriculture in my riding of Durham. In my remarks, I will certainly put on the record the names of those farms that I am familiar with.

In fact, it was just last week that I was on a farm tour, which started with a poultry farm. The next one was a blueberry farm, and the next one was a dairy operation.

As I said, my riding is a world leader in agriculture, and probably the largest sector would be the horticultural sector. I'll list a few for those here today.

Willowtree Farm in Port Perry is another regional award-winning farm of excellence in agri-food innovation. This is a family-owned market garden run by the McKay family, including Rod, Marlene, Jordan and Alex.

Then there's Steve and Lisa Cooper, who are the 2010 national winners in Canada's Outstanding Young Farm-

ers Program. They are the owners of the Cooper's CSA Farm and Maze near Zephyr.

Just yesterday, there was an opening I was unable to attend, but I know them generally as the Ing family—they have an organic farm, and they had their grand opening yesterday.

Wilmot Orchards is famous for their blueberries and apples—that's Charles and Judi Stevens—and they are featured in a recent farm tour.

Algoma Orchards is Kirk Kemp, president; Mike Gibson, CEO—innovators in agri-business, not only as growers, but also as packagers of apples, producers of apple juice and operators of a farm market near Newcastle. They now provide to Sobeys as well as McDonald's for most of Ontario, if not part of Canada.

Watson Farm is Ted and Paul Watson—a family farm for many years. In fact, my children, in the summer, before they were in university, worked on the farm. Watson Farm offers extensive pick-your-own products, as well as a roadside market in Bowmanville.

Archibald Orchards and Estate Winery—Fred and Sandy Archibald—are award-winning fruit wines, orchards and markets. In fact, they are so talented in agriculture and leadership in agriculture, that I believe Fred's brother Bruce was the Deputy Minister of Agriculture here, and federally as well. Fred and Sandy are both thoroughly involved in agriculture and, in fact, in agri-tourism as well.

Ocala Orchards, which is Irwin and Alissa Smith, is a historic family farm that is home to a vineyard, orchard, winery and retail shop. Formerly, it was a dairy farm, and they have transformed it to high-level, high-value agriculture.

#### 1000

The Found Family Farm, operated by Stan and Mary Ann Found and family, are proud to carry on an agricultural heritage that began with their family four generations ago on a Courtice farm—all meat, eggs and poultry. I would say that this farm here is the leader in agriculture education in my riding, and indeed in Ontario. They are involved with the royal winter fair. The head of the royal winter fair, the president, was Don Rickard, from Rickard's farm.

The list goes on, and I would say that there are farm markets in Port Perry and Uxbridge, as well as Clarington.

The Yellowlees Family Farm—Karen Yellowlees is the representative for the Durham agricultural advisory committee; I believe it's the Federation of Agriculture that I think she's the adviser for—have raised sheep, grown wild bird feed and produced home-baked goods on their farm for over 20 years.

Durham Farm Fresh promotes local food by bringing together farmers, farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture, chefs and restaurants in Durham region. There is a list of 50 farms marketing local food—almost all farms in Clarington, Scugog and Uxbridge within my riding.



In fact, the story of agriculture could be told every day by families that I try to represent effectively here in Ontario, but what I want to also put on the record is what this current government is not doing. I'm looking here at one of the petitions that was presented to me, and this is on the tire tax—the stewardship fee—being raised by 2,000% on farm or off-road agricultural—for their tires. That's just one example, as the member from Newmarket–Aurora stated, of the 154 different regulations and red tape, the 154 hours that farmers put into—I think that's the comment he made—working on red tape in agriculture.

This bill really is kind of a shameful experience of exploitation of agriculture. When I look at it—I think, if you look at Ontario, for instance, Ontario spends \$745 million per year on food for its institutions like universities, colleges and hospitals. That's 80% of the population, almost. The largest public sector institutions' cafeterias in Ontario should be required to use Ontario food. That's the problem; there's no strength.

Yesterday the Dairy Farmers of Ontario were here, and I'm sure they gave her an earful just about her position on chocolate milk—this sound-good, feel-good—she thought that it wasn't a healthy food. I can't believe the disservice that we hear in agriculture. I think the farmers in my riding of Durham should be respected, because my final remark would be to refer to one of the people that I consider a mentor to my activity in public life.

He was a fellow by the name of Garnet Rickard, who is in the Order of Canada, and he was in an agricultural farm family for years. He told me that you could see all of the class 1 farmland in Ontario from the CN Tower, and that's part of my riding. What they've done to it is shameful. In fact, the 407 goes right through some of the prime property, and those farmers are now being evicted. They're not being properly compensated for the farmland that has been taken from them to build a highway, and I believe that that kind of attitude towards agriculture is why I get so frustrated. A feeling of lack of respect for agriculture emanates from this current government.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Again I rise, and I will speak on behalf of the people of Algoma–Manitoulin and the concern that I've tried to raise in my earlier comments in regard to Manitoulin Island as a whole.

For those of you who don't know, it's a diamond. It's a diamond in the rough, Manitoulin Island, and I challenge you all and I welcome you all to come and visit the island. There is so much diversity on the island, with First Nations culture, with various artists, with communities, with museums and with a whole agricultural sector that is there, that is thriving and that is looking to diversify itself.

Last year, I had a nice chuckle at one of the farmers' markets. Over the last couple of years, as I've been going out to these farmers' markets—and these farmers' markets, you have to remember that it's a family-oriented business; it's really “my neighbour, my community,” and they move around. You have to understand that there's a

cycle around Manitoulin Island. Every weekend is identified for a particular activity, so you gear yourself to get to that activity in order to promote your farm, in order for you to sell your vegetables, in order for you to make a living.

Not only that, the hotels, the accommodations, the bed and breakfasts really count on that tourism coming to Manitoulin Island. Their umbilical cord is the Chi-Cheemaun, and unfortunately, every single day that the Chi-Cheemaun is not running, we are putting these people in a critical financial hardship and situation throughout the island. It is unfortunate to see that, because it is such a fantastic place.

Again, I challenge everybody to come there. But at the same time, pick up the phone, and why don't you get some of our ministries at the provincial and federal level to stop passing that hot potato, in order to get a decision to get the Chi-Cheemaun running so these families don't have to worry about feeding their kids? That's part of the Local Food Act, and if you can't promote it, it's going to be very hard to get to that island.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I'm delighted to say that on my left this morning, I have the wonderful member from Sarnia, who is having a chat with me.

I just want to comment on the inspirational speech that the member from Durham delivered today.

I just want to say—Dairy Farmers of Ontario. Will Vanderhorst, a director from my riding, has a wonderful dairy farm just south of Norwood. He's very supportive of the Premier also being the Minister of Agriculture, and he had nothing but laudatory praise yesterday when I met with him. And I'm glad that Kawartha Dairy was present yesterday—a great regional, local food producer.

In Peterborough, along with our folks from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, we have a phenomenal branding called Kawartha Choice, all local food. Get it in the Peterborough market every Saturday morning, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the afternoon. It's a great spot. Everybody's welcome there. The member from Timiskaming–Cochrane paid a visit to that market, and he thought it was one of the best in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** It's a privilege to comment on the member's comments from earlier. It is interesting, this food act. I had the pleasure of talking to this last week at some length.

I'm blessed in Barrie. We're an urban community. A lot of people don't realize this about Barrie: We don't have one farm in our community. However, we're surrounded by farms that feed us in our city. It's a unique situation, where we have a lot of restaurants in Barrie that specialize in serving and preparing local food, and local food means exactly that: It's actually very localized food. We have pig farms, dairy farms, all sorts of different farms in the area, and it's great to have that.

You know what? It's a big piece of our economy. My children go to a school where most of the kids who go to

this school in the city of Barrie actually come from farms on the outskirts of town, so they get an opportunity to go out and see and actually learn food literacy, understand what it takes to put food on the table, whether it's milk, beef, crops or whatever it is.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Boats.

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** And we need boats. We need the Chi-Cheemaun to run, to make it happen.

The point of this is that there are so many issues that need to be addressed by this bill, and it runs woefully short of addressing the serious issues that need to be addressed by the agricultural sector in Ontario. It just seems to me that it's okay to put another bill forward—the Liberals say it's okay to put another bill forward that has a nice name and has good intentions but does nothing.

It can't be that difficult, with all the people we saw here yesterday and other sectors in the agricultural industry coming here and telling us what they need, to give it to them. We're not even talking about money, in a lot of cases. We're talking about resources and we're talking about organization of the things that are already in place.

Let's start getting down to business, getting the backbone of our economy—which is agriculture—back on its feet and making sure that it stays on its feet for all the years to come.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's another opportunity to talk about agriculture in this House, and local food.

I'd like to branch out a little bit to the rural community as a whole, because for many people, and especially in northern Ontario, it takes more than—to create a local food economy, you need a lot of services, and in a lot of places, rural people are much more spread out.

We're facing an issue now where the TSSA—that's the semi-autonomous group that regulates gas stations and oil tanks. You know what? They do a valuable job. I'm not complaining. They serve a purpose. But in a riding like mine, they don't inspect gas stations for 10 years, and then they inspect them all in a row and everybody has to be fixed within a month and a half. These people want to keep up the code, but when you do that, what you end up doing is closing mom-and-pop gas stations in towns where you have one gas station. So you close that gas station; the next gas station is 50 clicks, 60 clicks, 70 clicks—in northern Ontario, 100 clicks. There are local food producers around that gas station. That's where they get their diesel fuel, and all of a sudden it's not there anymore. And we wonder why—

**Mr. Jonah Schein:**—people hate government.

**Mr. John Vanthof:**—we're losing local food; we wonder why people hate government.

And while the Tories go on about red tape, they created the TSSA, which is not responsible to government; and that's part of the problem. We can't rein these people in and say, "Okay, we want everybody to be safe, but the rules have to make sense for the size of the operation." Does the mom-and-pop gas station have to be safe? Yes, but I've got a station that sells 40,000 litres a year, and they're going to be shut down because they

need the same system as somebody who sells three million litres a year. It's crazy, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Durham, you have two minutes for a response.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Speaker, I want to thank the member from Algoma-Manitoulin, the minister of rural Ontario, and the members for Barrie and Timiskaming-Cochrane with respect to their comments. These comments show how important agriculture is, whether they're critical of our position on different things or not. But they do make the point, they are standing up for agriculture, where in fact on the government side, they're not.

I think I've got a good reference here. We can all criticize, but I think it's important, in my concluding remarks, to look at what recommendations we've put forward. Our critic Ernie Hardeman, the member from Oxford, as part of a consultation with rural Ontario, has put together a document referred to as Respect for Rural Ontario. In that, there are several recommendations that deal with some of the comments with respect to red tape and tire stewardship fees, as well as regulations like the TSSA that was just mentioned. This is having respect for rural Ontario, and that's—really, if you look at it, rural Ontario is under a lot of stress because farms today aren't 100 or 200 acres. Farms today, to be economically viable, are—in my riding, some of them are 3,000 to 5,000 acres. I think of Youngfield Farms as an example of two young, intelligent brothers who farm. They have all the latest technology. They have, I think, 3,000 or 4,000 acres themselves. So that's affecting rural Ontario. They can no longer have the small stores, and that's because instead of being 100-acre farms down a concession road, you have one farmer who owns the whole concession road. So rural Ontario is shrinking.

I want to put one more farm on the list here that I didn't take the time—Hank and Lisa Mulder have Link Gardens. It's a hydroponic operation. Now, this is a young family where he came from Holland about 20 years ago. He has built a thriving, successful business on his own, on his own knowledge, using the resources and innovation that agriculture in Ontario is famous for.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Seeing the time on the clock, the House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's not often that I have guests two days in a row from the great riding of Leeds-Grenville. I want to make sure I introduce Len and Barbara Waddingham from Brockville. They're here and they're the grandparents of Brigid Howard-Waddingham, who is one of the page captains today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Today, the Ontario Parliamentary Friends of Tibet are excited to welcome the Tibetan Women's Association, Students for a Free Tibet, and the



Tibetan Association of Ontario, who will be in room 230 with a wonderful Tibetan meal for everyone to celebrate together, and that's right after question period.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** It's my pleasure to introduce a guest to the Legislature today. We have Betty Kuchta with us here today. She is the CEO of the Erie St. Clair CCAC. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm not sure if they're here yet, Mr. Speaker, but I'm pleased to introduce Nima Basharat and Sharon Swenson. Nima's from my riding of Scarborough Centre, and Sharon is her colleague. They're both educators in the province of Ontario.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my privilege this morning to introduce two people from the great rural riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex: Jacques and Barb Tetreault. They've come up all the way from Chatham to experience question period and to be part of the budget this afternoon. Jacques is also president of the Chatham-Kent Christian farmers' association.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I'm proud to introduce today page Madison Hogg. Her mother is here, Dianne Ryan; her father, Robert Hogg; her sister Ainsley Hogg; her grandmother Maria Hogg; and her grandfather David Hogg. They will be here this morning in the members' gallery.

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce, in the members' gallery, Dean Demizio. Dean is the president of the Fort Erie chamber of commerce, but more importantly, he's the father of Gabriel Demizio, who's sitting to your right. He's a page from the great town of Fort Erie. Welcome to the page; welcome to Dean.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'd like to welcome James and Aileen Gallagher to the gallery this morning. They're two proud grandparents of Daniel Starrett, our great page from Whitby. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine, a celebrated accountant. His name is Mike Mokhtar. Michael, welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** This really isn't an introduction. It's just that I want to pass on my regrets to the member from Newmarket-Aurora on the 4-1 loss of his Maple Leafs last night.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further pseudo and actual introductions?

On behalf of the member for Eglinton-Lawrence, and on behalf of page Brigid Howard-Waddingham: mother Kelly Waddingham and mother Martha Howard, brother William Howard-Waddingham, grandmother Barbara Waddingham and grandfather Lenard Waddingham. Welcome today to Queen's Park.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is for the Premier. It's budget day, and over the course of the next week or so, the NDP is going to have to decide whether to support your government or allow Ontarians to judge your ability to govern.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I was almost ready to admonish the other side, and I'm going to let everyone know that I will keep control today.

The member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, come to order. The Attorney General, come to order. The member from Oxford, come to order, and the member from Leeds-Grenville, come to order.

Please put your question.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Premier, we know that nothing has changed. Time and time again, your government has shown that you're more concerned about your own interests than the interests of the province of Ontario. You've continued a pattern of spending that's intended to help no one but the Liberal Party. Consider it: eHealth, \$1 billion; Ornge, \$300 million; cancelled gas plants, \$600 million.

Premier, do you think a government that's blown some \$2 billion has earned the ability to govern the province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Today is budget day, and I really believe that the people of Ontario would expect that every member of this Legislature would read the budget before they decide whether they're going to support it or not. The budget today will be about creating jobs. It will be about making changes to help people in their everyday lives. So I would ask the member opposite if she is going to read the budget, if she is going to look at the details that we're going to talk about: youth employment, about reducing auto insurance, about investing in roads and bridges. Those are the issues that affect people's everyday lives, and I hope that the member opposite will read it and then make her determination.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary question?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I certainly do intend to read the budget, but most of it's already been leaked anyway. And the pattern is clear: Again and again, when faced with a decision to spend money for Liberals or spend money for Ontarians, the Liberals give priority to—guess what?—the Liberal Party.

Just yesterday, while Amanda Telford, an Ottawa mother, made the painful decision to leave her autistic son in a government building, the Liberal government was busy announcing—guess what?—a \$45-million subsidy for music producers. At every turn, this government chooses what it thinks is best for them.

Premier, do you think a government that prioritizes a \$45-million subsidy over basic critical services to families desperately needing their help has earned the right to govern?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am very aware of the media reports on this case and I—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from—Dufferin-Caledon; oh, I had to locate you.

Please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very aware of the media reports on this case. I can't comment on a specific case, but I recognize that caring for an adult family with a developmental disability can be challenging, and we will actually speak to that in our budget. If the member opposite reads the budget, she will see that.

From my perspective, these are not mutually exclusive issues. We absolutely have to work to make the lives of the parents who are working, who are living with children with developmental disabilities—we have to work to make their lives better. But that doesn't mean that we can turn our back on investing in an economy that will create jobs, and the music industry is part of that economy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Ultimately, this is a question about priorities.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order.

1040

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** This is a government that made the decision to spend some \$600 million to save a few Liberal seats. Yet there are thousands of Ontarians out there, like Amanda Telford, like Wilma Arthurs, who are unable to have even the basic supports they need in order to care for their disabled children.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Energy, come to order.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Premier, I will ask you again: Do you think a government that prioritizes saving their own seats over serving the needs of Ontarians at the very basic level deserves the right to govern?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

Premier.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Second time, member from Halton.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have said repeatedly, in answer to questions at committee and in this Legislature, that I regret that we have been in this situation around the relocation of the gas plants. We implemented a decision that had been made by every member in this House. All parties had decided that this is what they wanted to do, Mr. Speaker, because we all had listened to the members of the community and we determined that the gas plants needed to be relocated.

But to suggest that somehow, because that happened, because it was an implementation of a decision that we

all had made, that we can't then talk about the need to create jobs and make sure that we help people in their everyday lives is ludicrous. That is what the budget is about. That is what moving forward is about.

I regret that that happened. It shouldn't have happened. We have to make sure it doesn't happen again, but we also have to work together to improve people's lives and make sure that we create jobs in this province.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

While the clock is stopped, I believe there's a budget this afternoon, and I'm absolutely convinced each and every one of you wants to be there. If there's going to be a test of my will to bring decorum, I'll pass the test.

New question.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is also to the Premier. But may I say this first and foremost: This side of the House is appalled that you did what you just did in applauding that Premier after what happened in Ottawa to that family and the disabled son.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** No; shameful.

Now, to the heart of my matter, Speaker. Premier, during your testimony in justice committee on Tuesday, did you refuse to admit you knew the true cost of the Oakville power plant cancellation exceeded \$40 million from the outset because you were under oath?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I answered my questions on the gas plant relocations in committee, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to be clear. I am not going to and our government is not going to concede the ground on compassion to the people across the floor. That is the party that cut welfare rates. We created the Passport program. We have invested in autism, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** You want to slash taxes and slash—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, come to order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, come to order. The member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, come to order. The Minister of Social Services, come to order.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Well, I want you to come to order anyway. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of that party has said that what they want to do is cut revenue, cut taxes—that means cutting services. He's also said that he believes that everything he did when he was a cabinet minister in Mike Harris's cabinet was exactly what



should have happened, Mr. Speaker. We've seen that movie, and we're not going there.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Start the clock.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Perhaps the Premier is so angry because she did cede compassion to this party when her party decided to prioritize Liberal seats over the people of Ottawa.

Premier, Shelly Jamieson, JoAnne Butler, David Lindsay, David Livingston and Colin Andersen all testified that your Liberal government was aware that the true cost of the Oakville power plant was over \$40 million from the outset. Colin Andersen said that everybody knew. Shelly Jamieson said it was "buckets of costs."

In committee, you refused to admit what you knew and when you knew it, even though you were a co-campaign chair who made the decision and you were a cabinet minister who met about it.

I want to know: Why did she intentionally use the \$40-million figure when she knew it was false?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've answered my questions on the gas plant relocation in committee.

Let me talk about some things that I think the party opposite, given their position on fiscal responsibility, should be interested in and some reasons they should read the budget. Our deficit projection is now down to \$9.8 billion—a reduction of \$5 billion from last year. This is the fourth year in a row that Ontario has achieved a lower deficit forecast.

We're going to continue to build on our successes. This budget is going to be about creating jobs—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to pass phase 1 of the test. The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex is warned.

**Interjection:** Wow.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And anyone else who wants to "wow" will be warned, too. I'm going to show you my resolve. You want the test? I'll pass it.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The budget is going to be about creating jobs and working to improve people's everyday lives, Mr. Speaker. We're moving ahead on 60% of the Drummond report recommendations, which is something that has been coming across the floor to us. We are making changes. We are transforming government. We are going to be creating jobs and making people's lives better.

I think the party opposite should read the budget and then decide how they're going to vote on it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** That was cute. Speaker, we did read the budget. It has been 10 long years of Liberal rule that has cost us jobs, that has cost us our health care system, that is costing us our prosperity, that cost us our "have" status in this province.

Let's get back to the politically motivated decision to save Liberal seats in the last election, the one where she knew it was going to cost well over \$40 million from the outset. That strikes at the very heart of our democratic principles in this province, but do you know what else strikes at the heart of our democratic principles? Refusing to call a confidence motion that this party has tabled.

It is clear, having spoken to the public in the last week—and Tim Hudak will allude to this later today—that your government has lost confidence in the people and they have lost confidence in you. My question for the Premier, if she can listen for two seconds, is this: Will you call our confidence motion for debate? Will you call it for a vote, or will you simply table your budget and call—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Speaker, I have extreme faith in the people of Ontario. I believe that they deserve a government that is focusing on their needs and understands that their everyday lives have been tough in the last few years and that they're worried about whether they're going to get home care for their loved ones. They're worried about whether their adult children are going to get a job. They're worried about whether their small town is going to be able to flourish because the roads and bridges need to be maintained. They talk to their town councillors, and their town councillors say, "We've talked to the government, and we need a roads and bridges fund because we need this small town to have that support." We're providing that, Mr. Speaker. That's what we are putting in our budget.

Those are the issues we're going to be focusing on, and I really hope that the member opposite takes the time to look at the budget, takes the time to see what's there and think about what her constituents are talking to her about in terms of their everyday lives, and that she'll then consider whether she's going to support the budget or not.

## ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Premier. In today's tough economic times, people are worried about falling further and further behind. They're worried about their kids finding a good job, about their loved ones accessing home care and about household bills like auto insurance rising higher and higher. They're frustrated to

see a government more concerned with their political fortunes than the challenges facing the province.

Will the Premier listen to Ontarians' concerns, and will the budget today finally put people's priorities ahead of Liberal priorities?

1050

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have said consistently that what this budget is about—and really, Mr. Speaker, what our philosophy in this government is about—is about listening to people in the province, listening to people in communities and responding to them in a way that demonstrates that we do understand their concerns.

The issues that the member opposite has identified are ones that have been identified by his party, and they are ones that we were already working on, Mr. Speaker, whether it's home care or whether it is finding jobs and finding opportunities for young people to get an experience that would lead to a job—you know, making sure that they have a co-op placement or an internship so that they can get a foot in the door. Those are the kinds of issues that we need to focus on, and that's what you will see in our budget.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** At the same time that the Premier has been making all these grandiose things, she also claims that the government needs to be careful with the public's dollars. We know that's true, but you haven't been. Yet she seems fine with suggesting people should pay more, even though household budgets in many cases are strained.

Does the Premier think it's fair that a government spending billions on higher CEO salaries, corporate tax loopholes and cancelled gas plant deals is in reality asking people to pay more?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just take these issues one at a time, because the member opposite is talking about making changes that would require that we make an investment. I think what he's not saying is that that issue is investment in transit and making sure that we have the revenue streams that allow people to pick up their child from child care in a timely way and get home, get to work in the morning on time, get to school with their child in the morning. That's what building transit is about. Making sure that we have a revenue stream to build transit is extremely important to us, and I believe it's important to the constituents in the member's riding, in fact, and across the GTHA.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the relocation of the gas plants, I have said that we cannot let that situation happen again. We all agreed that the relocations needed to happen—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** If the Premier thinks transit is so important, then release the Metrolinx report you're sitting on. Let us all see it.

Ontarians want to see a balanced approach to balancing the books in today's budget. New Democrats have been clear: In these tough economic times, we shouldn't

be making it even tougher for families, to ask them to pay more. Ontarians want to see a government who understands their challenges, but that's not what we've been seeing in Ontario today.

Is the Premier ready to admit that her government needs to get her priorities in check, actually listen to Ontarians and put forward a budget with real results to the challenge facing the province and the people who live here?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Actually, I have not seen the Metrolinx report, so I'm not sure what the member opposite is talking about.

Mr. Speaker, our budget is going to be about creating jobs and making sure that we make improvements that will help people in their everyday lives. That is what the Minister of Finance has been doing for the last number of weeks. He has been travelling the province; he has been listening to people's concerns. That's what our jobs round tables were about, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's providing home care and making sure that people have home care in a timely way, or whether it's about helping young people to find their way into the workforce—because there is a mismatch between the jobs that are available and the skills that young people have. That actually was an idea that has come out of conversations with people across the province.

So that's what you will see in our budget, and I look forward to the debate, and I look forward to support from across the floor.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. When the government cancelled the Mississauga and Oakville gas plants, they wrote blank cheques to private power producers. Over and over, the Liberals chose to keep the public in the dark, keeping them in the dark rather than coming clean about the costs, which turned out to be eight times higher than the Liberals were willing to admit.

You'd think the government would have learned its lesson that the public doesn't like secret power deals. Will the government commit to ending secret power deals that leave Ontarians paying more?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I've answered many of these questions in committee, and I have said clearly that the way this process unfolded was unacceptable. We cannot let this happen again.

The reality is that everyone in this House agreed that these power plants should be relocated. We implemented that decision and we have to make sure that the process is changed for the next time around. But that discussion does not preclude the importance of bringing a budget forward that speaks to creating jobs and making sure that we make changes that help people in their everyday lives. It is imperative that we do that. That's what our budget is going to focus on, and I look forward to the debate in the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?



**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** To the Premier: The government doesn't have an estimate for the cost of refurbishing Darlington, yet nearly \$1 billion worth of contracts have already been signed. It's entirely possible that the cost of refurbishing Darlington will prove to be impractical or too expensive for Ontario.

Will Ontarians be left on the hook again like they were with the Mississauga and Oakville secret power deals?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The member will know that we have a long-term energy plan, and that long-term energy plan requires 47% of our generation to come from nuclear generation. We have announced that we're going to be—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I know that the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek would want to sit in his seat so I could tell him to stop. Thank you.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** —doing a review of the long-term energy plan. That will include looking at refurbishment and new nuclear. We will be listening to the opposition and meeting with the opposition critics. We will be consulting across the province. We have been extremely successful in our long-term energy plan to date. We've created over 11,000 megawatts of new generation at a time when we had blackouts and brownouts from the previous government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Premier, you don't seem to want to answer the question. When it comes to the government's plans for the refurbishment at Darlington, it's like you're driving by looking in the rear-view mirror. Ontarians need to know the costs before you spend the money, not when they get the bill. Why doesn't the government care about spending public money wisely?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The issue of the Darlington refurbishment and the possibility of new nuclear has been under discussion publicly. Ontario Power Generation has been doing all kinds of research on that issue. We are dealing with it extremely responsibly.

The important issue here is that we have to make a determination whether nuclear, as our baseload, is going to continue, as many people recommend, or not. We're going to have a review process, and I would expect that the member will not get so worked up that he won't have any energy left to help us in our consultations.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** My question is for the Premier. Yesterday in the Legislature, you said, "We must have a better process going forward ... I hope the justice committee, having heard all of the witnesses, is going to be able to help and give some advice on how, going forward, we can avoid this situation ever happening again."

Premier, we have 17 gas plants in Ontario, and there have been no problems with those existing ones. Why would you suggest that this fiasco might happen again? Is

it because you foresee your government needing to make a quick seat-saver decision again in the next election?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Actually, thank you for noting that 17 of the 19 gas plants that have been located were located in a very good way.

No, I was actually making the point that when there is a reversal of a decision; for example, when there was a hole dug on Eglinton Avenue for the Eglinton subway, and then the decision was made not to do that and \$100 million was spent—what I'm saying is that when decisions like that are made—and I know that the member opposite was part of the party that made that decision—I want to make sure that we have a process that is transparent, that's open, so that when we all determine, as we did in the relocation of the gas plants, that it needs to happen, the process is as open as possible.

1100

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Bruce—Grey—Owen—Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Again to the Premier: Despite your denials, you've been intimately involved in the gas plant scandal from day one. Here is what we know: You were a Liberal campaign vice-chair; you were a senior cabinet minister; you were a Chair of cabinet; and now, of course, Liberal Party leader and Premier.

Premier, you have said publicly that the Oakville gas plant would be \$40 million, a lowball by 775%. What we don't know is why you keep claiming ignorance after Colin Andersen exposed you by telling us under oath that everyone in the government knew the costs exceeded \$40 million. Please take responsibility. Please tell the truth. Premier, when were you told the costs were higher, and why did you continue to use the number that you knew was wrong?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have answered this question many times. I regret the situation. I take responsibility for making sure we have as open a process as possible. We need to make sure this doesn't happen again, Mr. Speaker.

However, this is not going to stop us from bringing in a budget that is going to create jobs and that is going to work to improve people's everyday lives.

Let me talk just about the announcements that we've made so far. We have said that we want to invest in home care to reduce the time that it takes for people to get home care. We're going to invest \$260 million for home and community care. What that means is, that's an extension of the health care that people receive at home. We are going to invest in a \$100-million fund so that small and rural municipalities will have access to infrastructure funding. That's what's going to be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## MUNICIPAL PLANNING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of the Environment, that's about it.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The OMB recently overruled the region of Waterloo's official plan and supported a sprawl development on 1,000 hectares of rural land. This ruling hurts local agricultural businesses and jobs, increases municipal infrastructure costs and undermines transit-oriented development.

This is far from the first time an OMB decision has gone against progressive planning principles and good local economies. When will the minister finally admit that the unelected, outdated OMB is not serving the needs of Ontarians and take action to reform this unelected body?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I guess I'll speak to the first part of the question. There were kind of two parts to that question. Certainly when the Ontario Municipal Board issued its decision with regard to the region of Waterloo's official plan and regarding the development of the area regarding their growth plan, they had contacted my ministry and asked for our assistance, and the city of Waterloo obviously sought appeal of this decision through the Divisional Court. We were contacted. We went back and discussed the decision, and certainly we shared our intent, we've made it public, that we will act as a party to Waterloo's decision, because certainly we think that that's important to do. Because the issue is before the courts, obviously it would be inappropriate for me to comment any further.

But I can comment to the importance of a growth plan. Certainly I think everybody in this Legislature understands that it's important to have a vision that guides all of the province and the Golden Horseshoe over the next 25 years, and we're working with municipalities to make that happen.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Minister, I have heard repeatedly from constituents who feel the OMB does not speak for them and that community members and municipal leaders should have more input into planning decisions. The OMB decision in Waterloo reveals systemic problems with the planning process, ambiguities about density targets and the Places to Grow Act, lack of consideration of local and environmental impacts, and a lack of municipal authority over official plans. When will the government fix the planning process so that it serves families and communities rather than the interests of those who hold power at the OMB?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I understand that many of my colleagues have an interest in improving the OMB, and certainly my colleagues from across the aisle have made suggestions on how we can improve it. Both parties have made suggestions, and we welcome their input on how to improve the process.

We listened to our municipal partners back in 2006 when we added the requirement that the OMB take into consideration the information that is provided by municipal councils in making their decisions. In addition, we also made sure that municipalities have the ability to

create their own local appeals body with regard to certain planning matters, showing our government's respect for elected officials and their decision-making.

Our government is always open and receptive to hearing new and constructive ideas on how to improve this system. Certainly, it's a conversation that I've been having with the AMO board at our MOU table, because we respect and want to consult with municipalities across Ontario on how to make the system more constructive.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. Speaker, as you've probably noticed by now, public transit is a passion of mine. It's a very important file for me, not just because of the reflection of my value systems—but the reality of living in a fast-growing suburb.

The reality is that Mississauga, as Ontario's third-largest city, not just deserves but needs more public transit, and I'm really proud to be part of an administration that has invested so much in Mississauga, whether it's more GO parking spots, whether it's more GO double-decker trains or whether it's two more trains on the Milton line.

But we still need more, and I know that the Big Move has big plans for Mississauga. Minister, I was interested to read today in the Globe and Mail that there was some talk about reconsidering some of the projects on the Big Move. Could you, Minister, please set the record straight on this article?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville, who has raised these issues consistently in the House.

The Big Move contains 15 projects that are described. The first-wave projects are under construction right now. We're very excited to see boring machines on Eglinton and across the GTHA. We are now moving with the balance of the second-wave projects, which we are also very clearly committed to and to seeing fulfilled. We look forward to working with Metrolinx and our municipal and regional partners, to fully realize and optimize those projects.

Our investment strategy, that is now being developed by Metrolinx, will make sure that this is not just a dream, but that they are fully realized, because we have to make sure we have the financial capacity to solve the congestion problem, get people home to their families on time and move these projects forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. It's really reassuring to know that we are still committed to the Big Move. I really want to thank you once again for some of the big investments that have been made in Mississauga, especially on the GO file, whether it's two more trains on the GO line, more parking or double-decker buses.

However, Minister, the article specifically mentioned the BRT, the bus rapid transit, as one of those projects



that might be reconsidered. The BRT is already under construction in Mississauga, and I know that my constituents are looking forward to its completion. Could you specifically speak to this project, Minister?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Not only is the BRT project a critical priority, but we've already put \$65 million, as a province, into the project. The city of Mississauga, as you know, is contributing another \$48 million for an 18-kilometre, two-way BRT system.

We are also moving forward in the second phase with projects like the Hurontario LRT and the Eglinton cross-town line. These are municipal priorities, and Metrolinx, in connecting to our Places to Grow plan and the Big Move, looks at the regional perspective on this and how we connect these projects going forward.

Our plan for the Big Move is more than simply a handful of projects or a number of projects. It is a plan meant to increase mobility and reduce congestion, and we will optimize each project to that outcome.

### HYDRO CHARGES

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question is for the Premier. Mitchell's Bay, a small town in my riding, experienced flooding in January which resulted in the loss of power to 45 homes and cottages. Sadly, they are still without power and may not have power restored until later this month, nearly five months later. Ironically, these 45 homes still continue to receive hydro bills, which include charges for delivery, debt retirement and global adjustment.

Premier, is your government so desperate to pay for your political decision to cancel the Mississauga and Oakville power plants that you have to continue to bill my constituents when they are not even receiving the service that you, Premier, are billing them for?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

1110

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about here is the reliability of the electricity system across the province. When we took over government, we had blackouts, we had brownouts, we had dirty coal-burning generation, and it was totally unreliable.

We have since built and invested in over 11,000 megawatts of new generation of power. We've almost totally eliminated dirty coal-burning generation. We have—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** While I'm prepared to talk to some people on this side, I'm now going to have to talk to people on this side. I wish I could figure this one out.

**Interjection:** Time, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And you can point to the clock all you want. Thank you.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We've invested over \$9 billion in new or expanded transmission services across the province.

On the particular issue that he's raised, I'll be more than happy to get the information and look into it, and get back to you before the end of today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Back to the Premier: This is simply not right. If your government cannot deliver an essential service, such as heating a home in the middle of the wintertime, then the least you can do is stop sending the bill. It is unacceptable that you are taking the people of Ontario to the cleaners to pay for the cost of your gas plant scandal.

Premier, no doubt I don't need to tell you that the people of Mitchell's Bay have lost all confidence in your Liberal government. Can you explain to this House why the people of Mitchell's Bay have to pay for the handful of Liberal seats that you saved by moving the Mississauga and Oakville gas plants and how this House can have any confidence in your Liberal government whatsoever?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, our system of LDCs—local distribution companies—including Hydro One, is among the best in North America. We have invested, as I mentioned, in transmission services in order to provide better service—\$9 billion over that period of time. We invested in a system that has—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Chatham-Kent—Essex is now warned—phase 2.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We invested in a system that had deteriorated beyond acceptable levels. The system was not reliable in any way, shape or form.

As I mentioned to the member, I'd be more than happy to receive the details and look into that issue for you, and get back to you before the end of today.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Speaker, there's a proposal to build an ethanol plant in Oshawa Harbour. Many people in Oshawa and across Ontario oppose this proposed plant because it's next to a provincially significant Second Marsh wetland and it will cause significant air pollution and truck traffic, and it's not consistent with the city's vision of a clean, people-friendly waterfront.

Why has the minister been so silent on this issue of concern to so many Oshawa residents?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I can't recall being accused of being silent at any time in this House or elsewhere.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The member says—should I repeat that?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You go ahead, because I was going to myself.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Okay.

I want to say that I have actually met with the mayor of Oshawa on this very issue and have had communications with him. As you know, this is under federal jurisdiction, and I know that there are a number of people who have made representations to the federal government on this and no doubt to the local federal members who represent that location.

But I do want to say that I have been in communication with and had a very good meeting with the mayor of Oshawa and have conveyed to the federal government the concerns that Oshawa has had in this regard, and I will continue to do so, even though it's under federal jurisdiction.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** The proposed ethanol plant may be on federal land but it has a clear provincial component. Communications from the Ministry of the Environment indicate that provincial laws apply to this project and that provincial permits are needed for water-taking during construction and to control noise, air emissions, and sewage and waste water emissions during plant operation.

When will the minister finally stand up for Oshawa Harbour and make it clear that provincial approvals will not be granted and construction of the plant will not be allowed to proceed unless environmental concerns are addressed?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I want to say that that's precisely what I've done in my discussions with the mayor of Oshawa. I know that you have probably asked your federal leader, Mr. Mulcair, to raise this issue in the House of Commons, because it comes under federal jurisdiction. They may have been preoccupied with other issues there. I understand that fully, but I would certainly suggest that a matter under federal jurisdiction should be raised, in fact, in the House of Commons of Canada.

Having said that, I have made known to the federal government the views of the mayor of Oshawa and those who have concerns about the proposal that is there, and I think the people in that area who have met with me are fully aware of the stand that I have taken in this regard. We want to ensure that all necessary protections are available to the people of that area, and I will ensure from a provincial point of view that that is well-known.

## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is to the ever-energetic Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. This government is strongly committed to providing access to our world-renowned colleges and universities, and our recent announcement of the reduced tuition framework has been well-received by students and families right across the province of Ontario, and in my riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

Post-secondary education is crucial to our economic future, and many students in high school are faced with tough decisions upon graduation. Students at the end of their high school careers must decide whether to attend

college and/or university. Some students worry that if they attend a college but later decide to attend a university, transferring credits can be difficult. I've also heard that students face transfer-credit challenges even when they move within the university system.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the hard-working minister, what are we doing to assist those students?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** To the visionary member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell—he does raise a very important issue, all kidding aside. Many students choose to move from one program to another during their academic career, and we have to make sure that they can do just that. I've recently met with the university and college presidents, and this important topic of credit transfer came up.

I think it's really important to point out that a great deal of progress has already been made on credit transfer. The ministry announced a provincial credit-transfer initiative worth \$73.7 million in funding over five years. We launched a bilingual credit-transfer website in 2011 to improve transparency and access to information, and we established the Ontario council on articulation, which is fostering these credit transfers.

There's more work to be done. I'm looking forward to working with all stakeholders to deliver even more progress when it comes to credit transfers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not to be a killjoy, but I want to be consistent when I'm in this chair. I am going to ask all members—because I have admonished someone in the past on the opposition side for using any kind of adjective in front of the minister's portfolio or the riding, I'm going to ask that that stop as well. It is not balanced and it's not helpful, so I'm going to ask everyone to please simply make mention of their riding or the minister's title. That's it. Just—it's not helpful.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Thank you very much, Speaker, and thank you to the minister for that very comprehensive answer. It is good to know of the steps taken to make movement within the post-secondary system easier. I urge the minister to push for more progress on credit transfer opportunities on behalf of students right across this province. The economy is changing fast, and students sometimes need to change their paths to adjust to those opportunities at the same time.

While university may be the best post-secondary route for some, the college route is becoming a first choice for many students as well, so I would ask the minister if he can confirm that Ontario's students are wise to consider colleges as an alternative first choice for post-secondary education.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** This is a very important question, and it's a very difficult decision for students to make as they graduate from high school: Do they go the college route or the university route? I think the good news is, here in Ontario, that is a choice that students have to make, but on either route they're going to be getting a world-class education here in the province of Ontario. That's good for all of our students.



In fact, in a recent survey of college graduates in 2011-12, over 83% were employed within six months of graduation. That shows good progress; I think there's more work to be done. Our world-class college system is demonstrating that the significant investments that we've been making in our colleges are paying off. Evidence of that fact is that 93% of employers who hired a recent college grad were satisfied—very satisfied—with their hire. That tells us the investments we're making in our college system are paying off. It's an excellent first choice for students across—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

1120

### WASTE DIVERSION

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. Minister, as of May 1, Ontarians who go to purchase a big-screen TV will be forced to pay a 40% higher eco tax, thanks to your government. The environment minister signed off on this massive eco tax increase without giving any forewarning to consumers. He knew full well that this decision would be extremely unpopular, so he hid it from the public, and still, to this day, refuses to admit he rubber-stamped this massive increase, even though I have his approval letter right here.

We know from the Premier's testimony at the gas plant committee that she clearly doesn't read documents she signs that link her to scandals and mismanagement. So can you tell this House if the environment minister at least ran it by you?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** To the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I've been discussing with a number of people the very inadequate Conservative bill, which was the Ontario Waste Diversion Act, and all of the problems that it has created for this province. Each one of the groups I talked to is very concerned about hearing what the Conservatives are saying on this particular matter, because they mischaracterize, on many occasions, what these are all about—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's a withdrawal.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I will withdraw. I've listened to many of the statements that have been made by members of the opposition. I'm going to tell you, they've come a lot closer to unparliamentary than what I just went through.

I want to say that the information that the member is trying to convey to this House, of course, is incorrect. He knows the Ontario government receives no money from this at all. He knows that this is a result of the legislation that his government put into effect, legislation we're going to change completely, revise completely and make sure that this kind of situation does not arise in the years to come.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** For the record, my question was actually to the Minister of Consumer Services. Asking the

environment minister about consumer protection would be like asking a bandit for a lesson in fair pricing.

Minister, as the person charged with protecting consumers, I'm sure you can understand why Ontarians are shocked that you failed to address this issue. Instead of standing up for consumers, you sat on the sidelines while the Minister of the Environment and Ontario Electronic Stewardship quietly plotted a massive new eco tax hike they both hoped would just fly under the radar. This behaviour couldn't be more unaccountable, lack more transparency and be more anti-consumer.

Minister, how can Ontario consumers have confidence in your government when you can't even protect them from your own environment minister?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Minister of the Environment?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I'm worried, first of all, that the very good veterans who are members of the Conservative caucus never seem to get a chance to ask any questions anymore.

We have introduced, as a government, two bills that are designed to help consumers in this province. The Progressive Conservative Party and caucus are stalling both of those bills without letting them go to committee.

But speaking of consumer ministers, the person who had a chance, back when you passed that ill-advised legislation in 2002—the leader of your party was the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. He, in effect, is the godfather of eco fees in this province.

**Interjection:** What did Bill Murdoch say about him?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** And I remember the quotation of one Bill Murdoch, a former member of this Legislature, on the job that the leader was doing at that time.

I hope that this member will support the legislation we'll be bringing forward to replace the ill-conceived, inappropriate legislation that was brought forward by your government.

### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, by your own admission, our jail system is currently operating at 95% capacity, and those numbers are only forecast to increase. Yet, your ministry is closing down a perfectly functional jail in Sarnia without any consideration for the safety of inmates and corrections officers. As we've seen at the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre, crowded and unsafe conditions lead to fights and lockdowns, which endanger the lives of inmates and staff.

Will the Liberal government create an actual plan to ensure the safety of inmates and correctional officers instead of closing down jails without the numbers to back up those closures?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** This is a very good question. Yes, we are having an issue with overcrowding in our jails, and we are addressing it. We will be opening two new jails pretty soon. We need to modernize our

system, and that's why I asked my staff to prepare a plan for renewal of our infrastructure. We are presently occupying jails that were built prior to Confederation, so we are closing them. We are modernizing our system.

As you know, because of a bill that was passed by the federal government, now we have more inmates coming into our system. So we are getting ready for that, and we will continue to modernize our jail system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** The minister makes a compelling case for continuing to keep the Sarnia jail open, obviously. You said that we have more inmates coming into the system due to the changes at the federal level.

Minister, a tool within the direct supervision model is space to properly house those who cannot cope appropriately within the jail. The Sarnia jail closure will mean less space for such inmates—no space, especially on weekends, which will lead to transfers to Toronto of inmates serving their jail sentences. The closure will lead to increased costs, hardship for correctional officers and inmates, and is just an overall bad plan.

Will the minister commit today to putting the safety of workers and inmates first?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Yes, I am committed to that, and that's why I asked my staff to give me a plan to modernize the system. But I'll say to the member on the other side that you should ask your brothers and sisters at the federal level to address this situation and ask for the help of the federal government to give us more money so that we can help to put in place a new and very modernized jail system.

I noticed that coming from the federal Auditor General—he's talking about \$11 billion of uncollected taxes. So if they do, then the federal government will be able to continue to transfer money to the province to allow—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** —to put forward their Bill C-10—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** —you know, the negative effect of having more inmates in our—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** This question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, with summer on the way, young people in Lisgar, Meadowvale and Streetsville are busy filling out applications to places like local golf courses, summer camps, retailers and other employers. While new and young workers bring a new energy to the workplace, they may not always recognize workplace health and safety hazards on their first summer job or their current summer job. In fact, new and young workers are four times more likely to be injured within the first month of their job than at any other time.

Minister, what role can youth, parents and employers in Mississauga play to make sure our Ontario workplaces are as safe as possible?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the member for a very important question. Ensuring healthy and safe workplaces is the most important part of my job. We all have a role to play to ensure that our workplaces are healthy and are safe, especially as the youth of our province are starting to find summer jobs. We need to make sure that they get those jobs and they are able to perform them at safe workplaces.

As I've said, Speaker, it is a partnership. We all have to work together so that we're keeping our workplaces safe for our youth. For example, for parents, I ask them to please check that your daughter or son receives health and safety training for their loved ones at the job. My message to youth is to be sure to inform your parents and the employer if you get injured.

1130

The year 2012 was the fifth consecutive year in a row that we conducted health and safety blitzes for new and young workers. We'll continue with these blitzes to ensure that our workplaces are safe for youth employees.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Minister, safety doesn't just happen, and new and young workers are often reluctant to seek help in staying safe on the job. Your ministry needs to focus on educating both workers and employers about their rights and responsibilities under the Employment Standards Act. Young workers are vulnerable. They may be taken advantage of if they're unaware of their rights in regard to such things as hours of work, required break times, minimum wage, overtime, termination and severance pay.

Recently the Ontario Court of Justice ruled on a case where the Ontario Ministry of Labour had charged an employer for failing to pay wages to its employees. Minister, what was the outcome of this decision?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Protecting vulnerable workers in seasonal businesses—or young workers—is a very important responsibility and priority for the Ministry of Labour. In 2007 and 2008, the ministry received employment standards claims from a substantial number of former employees who worked for a business known as All Pool Solutions and Aquatic Pool Solutions in Mississauga. Most of those claimants were actually students. The ministry issued three orders to the company to pay totalling \$63,000, and other charges were laid as well.

Most recently, the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton sentenced the director of that company to 90 days in jail, imposed a fine of \$15,000, and ordered the outstanding wages of about \$55,000 to be paid. I think it clearly shows that the government and of course our court system is very serious in protecting vulnerable workers like our youth. I encourage them to report any incidents to the Ministry of Labour.

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Minister of Health. Just before Christmas I emailed the minister's office to inquire about the approval process for funding



for Kalydeco, a new medication that shows great promise in the treatment of cystic fibrosis patients who have the G551D mutation. When the House resumed sitting on February 20, I spoke to the minister personally, informing her of the issue and asking for her help. I spoke to her again on March 20 and I raised it in the Legislature during debate on March 26. We learned in late March that the Canadian Drug Expert Committee has recommended that Kalydeco be placed on the formulary and be publicly funded for the treatment of cystic fibrosis patients aged six and older who have this genetic mutation. What is the minister doing to ensure that cystic fibrosis patients in Ontario who could potentially recover their health have access to Kalydeco?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you to the member opposite for this question. I know many of us in this Legislature advocate for patients who are looking for access to drugs that are not currently covered. I think it's important to acknowledge that our drug budget is now \$4.4 billion. That's a significant increase, an increase of \$1.4 billion since we took office. We're covering more drugs, and we're covering drugs for more conditions.

I think the member opposite does understand that this is a process. I've explained it to him before. We have actually taken these decisions out of the hands of politicians and put these decisions into the hands of experts. That is the right thing to do, and I look forward to updating the member on this particular drug.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I want to make it clear it was never my intention to politicize this issue. I first raised this with the minister last December and it's now May. The need for funding for Kalydeco for CF patients was brought to my attention by a constituent, Shelley Phipps, from Georgetown. Her 17-year-old daughter, Madison, has cystic fibrosis. In her young life, she has spent more than 250 days in the hospital. I have met with a representative of Kalydeco's manufacturer, Vertex, and I've communicated with CF Foundation. I've even met a CF patient named Chris MacLeod, who is a lawyer in Toronto who has gotten his life back because of Kalydeco. I want to do everything I can to help.

Will the minister commit to this House that she will undertake to do all that she can to expedite the process, giving hope to CF patients across this province?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I can assure you that I will do everything I can to ensure that the process is being followed in this case.

You know, we have a budget coming down this afternoon. One of the things we talk about in a budget is, can we afford to spend more to care for more people? Our government is very clear: We are prepared to spend more to support more people with their health care needs.

It's disappointing when I hear from the member opposite, who's going to vote against the budget even though they haven't even read it. Their plan is to cut spending. Our plan is to continue on a steady path to balance.

## SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Miss Monique Taylor:** My question is to the Premier. This week, Ontarians learned—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton is warned.

Ask your question, please.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Thank you. Speaker, this week, Ontarians learned about the Telford family. This family has been living with unimaginable stress and an endless battle to get appropriate care for their 19-year-old son, who is developmentally disabled and has autism. They finally reached the breaking point this week and had to relinquish care of their son.

My question is simple: Does the Premier think it is appropriate that this is the only way these families are able to secure the care and support for their children that they need?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm certainly aware of the media reports on this case, and as you know, I'm prohibited both legally and in professional practice from commenting on the specifics of any case. But that said, I recognize, as I think all members of this assembly do, that an adult family member with a developmental disability can be challenging for parents, particularly aging parents.

We understand the concerns that are being raised. We've made some real strides. Over the last few years, we've increased funding some 58%. We don't stop looking for solutions at any point. While each situation is different, our staff in the ministry and throughout Ontario are committed to responding as best we can to the needs of parents and children in this situation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Last fall, the Arthurs family in Sarnia was in a very similar situation. For years, they worked tirelessly to provide the care their daughter needed, but when this family reached their breaking point, there were no services there for them. Only after they left their daughter at the local Community Living and launched a very public campaign did this government find a workable solution.

It's shocking that in Ontario, families only receive appropriate care after giving up their children and going to the media. Does the Premier agree that no family should have to relinquish care in order to get appropriate services?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I want to point out to the member opposite that it was our government that created the Passport program and is investing \$1.7 billion. I just want you to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm trying to give you a hand.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Yes, thanks, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please.

Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate every break I can get in life.

We invest, on the residential side, some \$1.08 billion and some \$610 million in supports. I would just point out that the third party, when they issued their list of demands for the upcoming budget, regrettably didn't say a single thing about support for those requiring developmental services.

The Premier has said in an earlier response that we have every reason to look forward to—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Just to show you I wasn't kidding, the member from Prince Edward–Hastings is warned. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned. I hope our performance this afternoon doesn't challenge me to the next phase of my words to you.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Elgin–Middlesex–London has pointed something out to me that many of you have: I would like to introduce in the Speaker's gallery today Mr. Steve Peters, member in the 37th, 38th and 39th, and Speaker in the 39th Parliament.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have a feeling that they want us to switch spaces; I'm not sure.

Oh, no, thank you? Okay.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1140 to 1300.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### GREY BRUCE SINGERS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I rise in the House today to recognize a community choir in my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. The Grey Bruce Singers are a community choir located in Hanover, Ontario, and have recently been invited by Distinguished Concerts International New York City to participate in a performance of Handel's Messiah at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in New York City on Sunday, December 1, 2013.

The Grey Bruce Singers received this invitation of honour because of the quality and high level of musicianship demonstrated by the singers. The choir is a group of 70 to 90 gifted singers, men and women, ranging in age from teens to seniors. They sing under the direction of Dianne Leith, with the talented accompaniment of Chris Patterson. Under the artistic direction of Leith, who lives in Holstein, and the accompaniment of Durham's Patter-

son, since 1980, the Grey Bruce Singers have produced 66 seasons of musical productions, each including five performances per season.

Their repertoire includes a wide selection of secular and sacred music both old and new. The talents of the group go beyond singing to include dancing, staging, props, costumes, ticket design, sales, advertising and all the other things that go to make up enjoyable practices and successful concerts.

Although the Grey Bruce Singers is a Hanover-based community choir, its talented voices come from many surrounding communities such as Mount Forest, Ayton, Holstein, Durham, Harriston, Palmerston, Dundalk, Flesherton, Markdale, Eugenia, Walkerton, Formosa, Mildmay, Elmwood, Listowel, Wiarton, Guelph and more.

I welcome everyone to visit my riding. Come out to one of their practices or concerts and see what they have to offer.

##### TIBET DAY

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's an absolute delight to stand here today and to acknowledge that it's the second annual Tibet Day at Queen's Park. I hope members here will enjoy the wonderful food. Today it was hosted by the Ontario Parliamentary Friends of Tibet, and with them the Tibetan Women's Association, Tibetan Association of Ontario, and Students for a Free Tibet; all were in the House. By the way, we have our very first Tibetan page, Tenzin from Durham, the very first Tibetan page ever at Queen's Park, so we're delighted with that as well.

Of course, on a more sombre note, one of the reasons that Tibetans would like to come here and to be able to speak to our MPPs and through them, and in Ottawa through the Parliamentary Friends of Tibet to our federal MPs, is that one day they would love to be able to celebrate back home in Lhasa. Most of the Tibetans here are here because they came from refugees or are refugees, and all they really want is freedom in Tibet. We've had over 100 Tibetans self-immolate to date. The conditions there are worsening. And so I ask, on behalf of the Tibetans, for all of our combined prayers and hopes for them so that one day Tibet will be free.

Until then, there's still some food available if you want to leave the chamber for a few moments, and definitely say hello, tashidelek, to our Tibetan friends.

##### YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I am honoured to congratulate a group of outstanding youth from my community of York South–Weston. Last week, WAVE Youth Action Team was honoured at a Queen's Park ceremony to celebrate its commitment and outstanding achievements in serving victims of crime.

WAVE stands for Working Against Violence Everyday, and was founded by Louise Russo around the principles of respect, responsibility, and the role of leadership in reducing violence in schools and communities.



Working with a group of 18 high school students from Chaminade College in York South-Weston, WAVE received an Attorney General's Victim Services Award of Distinction for creating an anti-bullying, anti-violence presentation for children in grades 2 to 6. The team developed a hands-on interactive workshop and has presented it to more than 450 students so far. The workshop supports victims by enforcing the message of speaking up, time away, opening up and peace to identify bullying behaviour.

I had the privilege to meet with a number of Chaminade College students last week at the ceremony, and I was very impressed by the dedication shown by these youth to make their community a safer and more supportive place.

Thank you for all your work to bring attention to the important issues of bullying and youth violence, and congratulations on your recognition.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's my pleasure to recognize, and I ask members to recognize, the names of Clint Cole, Doug Taylor and a few other people who are members of the Enniskillen Environmental Association.

Members should be aware of the alarm bells that have been raised by citizens in my riding over the health and environmental implications regarding the Clarington transformer station project. This \$270-million project by Hydro One will be built on 100 acres in an environmentally protected area in the Oak Ridges moraine and the greenbelt.

The Enniskillen Environmental Association warns that any leakage from the transformer station would pollute the aquifers of the Oak Ridges moraine, which is a key source of drinking water for southern Ontario.

This week, we learned that the gas plant fiasco in Mississauga and Oakville has officially wasted almost \$600 million—I suspect it's a billion dollars. This is one more example of projects not being managed. We want to ensure that history does not repeat itself here.

Clarington council, as well as Durham regional council, are calling on this government and the Minister of the Environment and, indeed, the Minister of Energy, to reconsider the approval process itself and demand a complete environmental assessment.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this government to put health and the environment first. I urge this government and the House to listen to the citizens and find alternatives to the Clarington transformer station before millions of tax dollars are wasted on an environmentally sensitive project.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. John Vanthof:** The North East LHIN has ordered an independent review of the Anson General Hospital in Iroquois Falls. The review is currently under way. It was initiated because of community complaints regarding the governance of the hospital, and public allegations by the hospital's administration regarding former staff.

The community members who were most vocal in their complaints are being sued by the hospital board. So, while they are participating in a review ordered by the LHIN, they are facing legal action funded by the same LHIN and, ultimately, by the Ministry of Health.

The hospital has a whistle-blower policy which includes protection for those who present a complaint to any governmental authority. Some of the defendants have made formal complaints to me, their MPP, but are still being sued. One defendant has listed his home to pay legal fees. The community is holding a garage sale to help out. This is simply unacceptable.

The defendants are not the only victims in this saga. The board members did not volunteer their time to be dragged into a fight beyond their control. The front-line staff are under incredible pressure. But the ultimate victims are the residents, particularly seniors, who are deeply concerned about the future of the health care system in their town.

Ironically, tragically, everyone involved in this issue has the same goal: to maintain and improve the health care in their town. I respectfully request that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care urge the board to drop their legal action so that the review can be seen as unbiased. Legal fees don't improve health care.

### EVA CHU

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Last week, the Mississauga Chinese Business Association celebrated some special young men and women at its annual general meeting and networking dinner at the Summit Garden restaurant.

MCBA promotes business opportunities between Canada and China, which includes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and speaks for the Chinese business community in Mississauga.

During the inauguration of the Young Professional Board, I presented an award recognizing Leading Women, Building Communities to Eva Chu. Eva's award recognized her past and ongoing work to improve the lives of others through her high school and university career, in her community church involvement, as a student leader and as a volunteer for the Mississauga Chinese Business Association. Eva hails from a family in which the values of community service have always run deep.

The Leading Women, Building Communities recognition program acknowledges the contributions of individuals who improve the lives, careers and vitality of women of all race, culture and ethnic origin in their community through public service involvement and by eliminating barriers to entry in the workplace.

Eva Chu was a very deserving winner, and the whole community is especially proud of Eva Chu.

1310

### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** On April 22, 2013, the Superior Court of Ontario stated that residents in rural Ontario are

experiencing a property devaluing of 22% to over 50% due to the construction of industrial wind turbines on and around their property. Rural Ontario, including the riding of Chatham—Kent—Essex, is suffering in many ways due to these turbines.

Turbines are popping up in Chatham-Kent faster than you can say “coalition.” Time and time again, this Liberal government, along with the NDPs, has consistently defeated PC bills that would have helped put Ontario back on the right path. Both parties did it prior to the McGuinty government proroguing this Legislature, and they continue to do so with the McGuinty-Wynne government.

There seems to be a pattern forming here. Perhaps the NDPs should change their call letters to the NDPP, the New Democratic Prop Party, since all they do is consistently prop up this Liberal government in defeating solid bills.

The current Liberal-Party-elected Premier Wynne has stated publicly that we need more municipal autonomy on decision-making, which includes whether or not a municipality wants wind turbines in their area. It may be too little, too late for Chatham-Kent, but it's not too late for the rest of Ontario.

In future, I call on this government to make all the costs of turbine development known to local farmers and residents. This includes financial, health and energy costs.

Today is a momentous day for the province in the presentation of the budget. I sincerely hope that it marks a change in how the concerns of rural Ontarians are heard.

#### ELVENIA GRAY-SANDIFORD

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** I rise today to speak about a very special person: Elvenia Gray-Sandiford or, more aptly, Auntie Elvenia, auntie to an entire community.

I first met Elvenia when she walked into my constituency office shortly after I was elected, demanding that I sign certificates for her volunteers. I remember thinking, “My God, what a go-getter.” Little did I know just what a bundle of energy Elvenia was and continues to be.

Technically or, I guess, officially, she is the president of TransformNation. It's an organization that is devoted to fighting childhood obesity. She lives in my riding, and she has just been toiling away on this issue without—there are people who get a lot of exposure in the media, and, you know, they're all about it. But with Elvenia, it's just about working in the trenches.

After all of these years of toiling away in anonymity, she has finally gotten her day of recognition, because recently she was declared Mississauga Citizen of the Year. I cannot—

*Applause.*

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Yes, thank you so much.

I cannot think of a more deserving person, because she's in it for the right reasons. She truly is an aunt to our community, because she looks after everybody and she cares about everybody.

Most important of all, what Elvenia said is that as important as the honour is, the real reward is in just serving the community.

#### SHIRLEY PERRY

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It is my pleasure to rise today to recognize the contributions of an Orangeville resident, Shirley Perry, who has recently been recognized for her incredible 65 years as a volunteer with the Canadian Cancer Society. What an amazing achievement—an incredible gift of giving.

Shirley spends many hours visiting with others who have been diagnosed with cancer. As a cancer survivor herself, and having cared for her late husband when his own health began to fail, Shirley's personal insight and encouragement has been a great benefit to many as she helps cancer patients progress through their own treatment. Whether it is a call to check in on how someone is feeling, or a visit to help out with exercise or a new piece of medical equipment, Shirley makes a difference in the lives of others.

The Canadian Cancer Society is an organization that depends on its many volunteers, and it is long-serving and dedicated volunteers like Shirley who help and serve as an inspiration for others. Since 1948, Shirley has been both a fundraiser and a personal visit volunteer, including participating in last year's Dufferin Relay For Life survivors' lap.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of our community, and last week, in recognition of National Volunteer Week, I was proud to thank all of the volunteers in my riding and across Ontario. It is especially gratifying today to highlight the significant volunteerism of Shirley Perry, who continues to be an exceptional example for many.

On behalf of Dufferin—Caledon residents and the Ontario Legislature, it is an honour to congratulate Shirley for what you have done and continue to do. Thank you for being one of our outstanding volunteers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

#### PETITIONS

##### LAND USE PLANNING

**Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Newmarket—Aurora.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Thank you, Speaker. Sometimes it's more difficult to be recognized here than others. I appreciate this.

I have a petition here signed by hundreds of residents of Newmarket regarding the Places to Grow Act and how it is impacting their community. It reads as follows:

“Whereas municipalities are required to produce official plans that are compliant with the Places to Grow Act and the provincial growth plan; and



"Whereas the province of Ontario prescribes population growth and intensification targets through the provincial growth plan that must be met by municipalities; and

"Whereas, even if the designated growth and intensification numbers are met, they are deemed to be minimum numbers; and

"Whereas the Ontario Municipal Board may approve densities to be located in areas not identified in the official plan, resulting in significant additional costs to the municipality because of required changes to long-term infrastructure plans, and also disrupts the character of existing communities;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Preserving Existing Communities Act, 2013 proposed by Newmarket–Aurora MPP Frank Klees"—Speaker, that is me—"that amends the Places to Grow Act, 2005 to provide that a decision made by a municipal council is final and may not be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board if the following conditions are" met:

"(1) The decision is to refuse a request to amend the municipality's official plan with respect to land that is designated for one or more of the following: stable residential area and parks and open space.

"(2) The municipal council has passed a resolution stating that the requested official plan amendment would not be in the best interests of the municipality."

Speaker, I will affix my signature to this and look forward to this bill being called for debate in the general government committee.

#### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"On behalf of all the Ontario dogs and puppies imprisoned in puppy mills, let's put an end to this unnecessary suffering. Unfortunately, these dogs and puppies cannot speak for their rights and their cries are unheard except by those inflicting their pain. They need us to speak out for them and save them from being victims of a life whose fate is painful suffering and ultimately death.

"While the Humane Society of Ontario and the OSPCA are trying to combat the proliferation of puppy mills, locating and shutting down puppy mills is an extremely difficult task. We need criminal legislation to ban puppy mills outright and empower the proper authorities to apprehend and prosecute to the full letter of the laws that protect man's best friends our dogs and puppies.

"We, the undersigned, implore the Ontario government to take into consideration passing a criminal law which bans puppy mills province-wide and imposes stricter penalties to those who break this law. We need to stop the unnecessary suffering of these animals who share our world.

"Please hear our plea and the plea of so many others who speak on behalf of these dogs and puppies who

cannot speak for themselves. Leave the breeding to those who do it for the love of dogs and not the love of greed.

"Perhaps if Ontario passes this law, other provinces will follow and we can put an end to this nationwide cruelty forever. Please give these dogs and puppies the liberty and safety they deserve and so desperately cry out for."

1320

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** "Whereas the agri-food industry is now, and has historically been, one of the primary economic drivers in Ontario; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario support local processors and producers in Ontario through purchasing and consuming locally grown and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and processed food products; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario farmers and Ontario food producers by leading by example; and

"Whereas the province of Ontario celebrates local Ontario producers and processors and promotes the good things grown, harvested and made in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 36, the Local Food Act."

I'll sign it and send it to the table with page Simon.

#### FISHING REGULATIONS

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition that's signed by a colleague, a strong supporter who's concerned with this issue, Bob Holden, who has joined us here today, which reads:

"Whereas the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary is printed each year by the Ministry of Natural Resources and distributed to recreational fishermen throughout the province to inform them of all the relevant seasons, limits, licence requirements and other regulations; and

"Whereas this valuable document is readily available for anglers to keep in their residence, cottage, truck, boat, trailer or on their" possession "to be fully informed of the current fishing regulations; and

"Whereas the" Ministry of Natural Resources "has recently and abruptly drastically reduced the distribution of the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary such that even major licence issuers and large fishing retailers are limited to one case of regulations per outlet; and

"Whereas anglers do not always have access to the Internet to view online regulations while travelling or in remote areas;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately return the production of the Ontario Fishing Regulations Summary to previous years' quantities such that all anglers have access to a copy and to distribute them accordingly."

I affix my signature in full support, Speaker.

## HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

“Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

“Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act,” the HST, “cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

“Whereas electricity generated and used in north-western Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation.”

I will support this and give this to page Eve to deliver.

## AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition that's addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly entitled “Good Things Grow in Ontario,” and it is signed by people from all over Markham and Scarborough. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the agri-food industry is now, and has historically been, one of the primary economic drivers in Ontario; and

“Whereas the people of Ontario support local processors and producers in Ontario through purchasing and consuming locally grown and raised fruits, vegetables, meat and processed food products; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario, and the Premier of Ontario, support Ontario farmers and Ontario food” processors “by leading by example; and

“Whereas the province of Ontario celebrates local Ontario producers and processors and promotes the good things grown, harvested and made in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario pass and enact, during spring of 2013, Bill 36, the Local Food Act.”

I completely agree with this petition and will send it down with page Megan.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Ms. Julia Munro:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario's tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the ... Wynne government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

As I am in agreement, I've affixed my signature—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Petitions?

## RADIATION SAFETY

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have this petition that comes to me from all over Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas there are risks inherent in the use of ionizing, magnetic and other radiations in medical diagnostic and radiation therapy procedures; and

“Whereas the main piece of legislation governing these activities, the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (HARPA), dates from the 1980s; and

“Whereas neither the legislation nor the regulations established under the act have kept pace with the explosion in imaging examinations, including image-guided procedures used in cardiology, radiation therapy, ultrasound, orthopaedics,” and many more;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care establish, as soon as possible, a committee consisting of experts to review the Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act (1990) and its regulations and make recommendations on how to modernize this act to bring it up to 21st-century standards, so that it becomes responsive to the safety of patients and the public and covers all forms of radiation that are currently used in the health care sector for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.”

I fully support this petition, Mr. Speaker, will affix my name to it and ask Gabriel—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Further petitions?

## AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas collecting and restoring old vehicles honours Ontario's automotive heritage while contributing to the economy through the purchase of goods and services, tourism, and support for special events; and

“Whereas the stringent application of emissions regulations for older cars equipped with newer engines



can result in fines and additional expenses that discourage car collectors and restorers from pursuing their hobby; and

“Whereas newer engines installed by hobbyists in vehicles over 20 years old provide cleaner emissions than the original equipment; and

“Whereas car collectors typically use their vehicles only on an occasional basis, during four to five months of the year;

“Therefore, be it resolved that the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians who collect and restore old vehicles by amending the appropriate laws and regulations to ensure vehicles over 20 years old and exempt from Drive Clean testing shall also be exempt from additional emissions requirements enforced by the Ministry of the Environment and governing the installation of newer engines into old cars and trucks.”

I'm pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Further petitions?

#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Mr. John Vanthof:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s mineral wealth belongs to the people of Ontario;

“Whereas the people who collectively own these natural resources should stand to enjoy their benefits;

“Whereas Ontario’s Mining Act presently calls for resources mined in Ontario to be processed in Canada, yet allows cabinet to grant exceptions to the clause;

“Whereas these exceptions ensure residents of Ontario are told why our resources are being shipped elsewhere—information that can be used to better plan for infrastructure and job training needs to ensure a more competitive environment;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To amend the Mining Act to ensure that people living in Ontario maximize the benefit of their natural resources.”

I fully agree, and I'd like to give it to page Benjamin.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Further petitions? The member from Durham.

#### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've regained confidence in you.

“Whereas Ontario’s Drive Clean program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

“Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and

“Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions were, in fact, the result of factors other than the Drive Clean program,” such as high manu-

facturing standards and emission-control technologies; and

“Whereas from 1999 to 2010 the percentage of vehicles that failed emissions testing under the Drive Clean program steadily declined from 16% to 5%” today; and

“Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test no longer assesses tailpipe emissions, but instead scans the on-board diagnostics systems of vehicles, which already perform a series of continuous and periodic emissions checks; and

“Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method;”—this is interesting—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** “Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“That the Minister of the Environment”—who’s here today—“must take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program” completely.

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that comes from the people of the northeast and a few of them from all over Ontario.

“Whereas there are a growing number of reported cases of abuse, neglect and substandard care for our seniors in long-term-care homes; and

“Whereas people with complaints have limited options, and frequently don't complain because they fear repercussions, which suggests too many seniors are being left in vulnerable situations without independent oversight; and

“Whereas Ontario is one of only two provinces in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have independent oversight of long-term-care homes. We need accountability, transparency and consistency in our long-term-care home system;”

Therefore, they “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand the Ombudsman’s mandate to include Ontario’s long-term-care homes in order to protect our most vulnerable seniors.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Karinna to bring it to the Clerk.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 58(b), this House stands recessed until 4 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1331 to 1600.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## 2013 ONTARIO BUDGET

## BUDGET DE L'ONTARIO DE 2013

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by Ms. Wynne, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Sousa has moved, seconded by Ms. Wynne, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

I will ask for all of our indulgence and removal of our hands to seek the pages to distribute the budget.

Wow.

I must ask the obligatory question: Do all members have their copies of the budget? Agreed? Agreed.

Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the 2013 budget.

And it is, in every sense, Ontario's budget.

It is a budget that reflects the priorities of people across Ontario ...

That speaks to their values ...

And that includes the input from hundreds of thousands of people all across the province.

This budget also speaks to the priorities and values of our new government ...

And of Ontario's new Premier.

Representing the best interests of this province ...

Listening to people's ideas and acting on their concerns has characterized Premier Wynne's leadership.

This approach defines our government ...

This approach forms the basis for this budget ...

A budget that lays out our plan for a prosperous and fair Ontario.

Un budget qui présente notre plan pour un Ontario prospère et équitable.

A budget based on our government's firm belief that we must take a balanced approach ...

That we must build our economy and prepare our workforce for the future, by supporting one another today.

Mr. Speaker, before I lay out that plan, let me say this:

Standing in this Legislature is a true honour for me, particularly today.

And I am certain that every member of this House feels the same way ...

Privileged to serve ...

Humbled by the work ...

And despite the give and take of this place ... I know I speak for all my colleagues on both sides of this House when I say there is no greater honour than to serve the people of Ontario.

I thank them for this opportunity.

Looking at our province, we see that Ontario remains a great place to live and work ...

Thanks to the efforts of men and women across Ontario.

During the worldwide recession—the worst global economic downturn in 80 years—people worked hard ...

They worked hard to protect our schools and hospitals, protect and create more jobs, and to invest in modern infrastructure.

They worked hard to help Ontario recover ...

And we're recovering.

Today, Ontario enjoys strong economic fundamentals.

We have a highly educated and diverse workforce to support greater prosperity.

Our tax reforms have helped turn Ontario into one of the most investment-friendly places in North America to do business.

We must continue to build our strong, prosperous economy ...

While protecting the high-quality public services that people expect and deserve.

People also expect the cost of these services to be sustainable and affordable.

They don't want to see excessive debt levels ...

They want to see their government take a long-term view ...

That is why our government is absolutely committed to eliminating the deficit by 2017-18 ...

C'est pour cette raison que notre gouvernement est résolu à éliminer le déficit d'ici 2017-2018.

And then reducing the net debt-to-GDP ratio to the pre-recession level of 27%.

We're taking a balanced approach to eliminating the deficit.

We reject across-the-board cuts that threaten our priorities in health care, education and job creation.

Right now, we also cannot afford further reductions in Ontario's low corporate taxes that would make it harder to eliminate the deficit.

And above all, we reject uncontrolled growth in program spending ...

Because that would increase debt and interest costs that would take resources away from key priorities.

We will not shift the burden of debt to future generations, nor will we ignore the responsibilities we face today.

This allows us to make smart investments for Ontario's long-term prosperity, while remaining steadfast in our efforts to eliminate the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, job creation is an important measure of a healthy economy.

When an economy is growing steadily ...

Jobs are being created.

The government's role in job creation is to convene people ...

Educators, labour, the not-for-profit sector and business ...

To work together towards common goals.

To encourage the right environment for businesses and for people to succeed.



They, in turn, will take risks, make investments, create jobs and drive innovation.

This approach is helping Ontario's economic recovery.

Since the depths of the global recession, Ontario has created 400,000 net new jobs.

Our balanced approach to eliminating the deficit is working.

In fact, by beating our fiscal targets, we can continue to invest in the things that matter most to people every day.

En fait, en dépassant nos objectifs financiers, nous pouvons continuer d'investir dans les choses qui comptent le plus pour la population.

Ontario's deficit for 2012-13 is now estimated to be \$9.8 billion—a \$5-billion improvement compared with the 2012 budget forecast.

Some of this progress comes from being disciplined.

It also comes from a lot of hard work ...

Sixteen out of 25 ministries are delivering quality public services while spending less than they were allocated last year.

This is the fourth year in a row that Ontario has reported a lower deficit than forecast ...

The only government in Canada to achieve this level of success.

It also marks the second year in a row that the rate of growth in program spending is projected to be less than 1%.

1610

In the years to come, controlling spending growth will take the same, ongoing effort.

As a government, we acknowledge and face ...

Challenges that are under our control, like spending ...

And economic challenges that are not under our control, like changes in the global economy.

Forecasts for global economic growth have weakened.

European economies are in recession and growth of emerging markets and market economies has slowed.

Ontario still relies heavily on the U.S. economy as a major export market ...

And we're facing serious challenges when competing globally.

Advantages we had here in Ontario, not that long ago, have changed.

During the 1990s, for example, we enjoyed a low Canadian dollar ...

Cheap oil ...

And access to strong markets in the United States.

Today, the dollar is close to parity ...

The price of oil is high and U.S. economic growth remains modest.

In the face of new challenges we will find new advantages.

Our government's economic renewal plan for jobs will help Ontario face these challenges and stimulate growth.

So here's what we will do:

One: We will maintain Ontario's competitive business climate by keeping taxes at a low level.

We will extend—

*Applause.*

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Yes.

We will extend the accelerated capital cost allowance for machinery and equipment—providing \$265 million in assistance to manufacturers over three years.

We will provide small businesses with greater relief from the employer health tax ...

By proposing to increase the amount of annual payroll that is exempt from the tax.

The cost of this tax break for small businesses would be paid for by eliminating the same exemption altogether for larger corporations.

Two: We will continue to make investments in modern infrastructure.

Because we know that growth in Ontario's economy is supported by the movement of goods and people.

That's why Ontario's budget provides more than \$35 billion in infrastructure investments over the next three years ...

Including a new, dedicated fund to help small, rural and northern municipalities address roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure.

The province will consult on the components of a permanent program for next year's budget.

For years, Ontario has been transferring two cents per litre of the gas tax to our municipal partners ...

To help with the expense of public transit.

These partners have asked us to make this funding permanent.

This budget proposes to do just that—to provide stability and certainty for transit solutions.

We must address gridlock as well.

Every minute a worker spends stuck in traffic is a minute lost in productivity.

Every idle truck on a highway is an opportunity for a competitor to find an advantage.

Facing this challenge requires sound public policy ...

And sufficient public investment.

That's why our government will consider a range of new revenue tools to support the expansion of transportation and public transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

We will take action following the release of the Metrolinx investment strategy ...

To implement revenue tools that will provide the means to ease gridlock.

This will prevent the addition of further pressure on our property taxes.

As an example of the change required, Mr. Speaker, we will turn select HOV lanes into HOT lanes.

Toll-free options would continue to exist on all the highways that have these lanes.

We will set out our plan and consult on the design before moving to introduce this measure.

Three: We will invest in the skills and education of our workforce, particularly when it comes to our young people.

Ontario's budget proposes a comprehensive Youth Jobs Strategy that invests \$295 million over two years.

This strategy would generate job opportunities for about 30,000 young people.

We will engage with youth and young professionals to ensure they get the right training ...

The right job opportunities and have the tools they need to succeed.

Four: We will strengthen the ability of Ontario's entrepreneurs to transform ideas into goods and services for global markets.

We will continue to invest in arts and culture, including \$45 million over three years to help support jobs in the music industry.

This fund will help the industry create jobs as Ontario becomes a leading place to record and perform.

Five: We will work with businesses to expand global market access for goods and services.

We must leverage our relationships around the globe to help Ontario businesses seek out new markets for new opportunities.

So we are working with the federal government to expand trade agreements and help exporters with over 60 trade missions to new markets over the next year.

And six: We will help to ensure that all Ontario communities and regional economies benefit from new opportunities.

The Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program continues to support economic development, helping communities make investments to create jobs.

The measures outlined in Ontario's budget will help existing industries across all sectors expand ...

From automotive to agriculture.

The government will continue to assert Ontario's pride in manufacturing, financial services, tourism, forestry and natural resource development.

Ontario's agri-food industry is one of the biggest drivers of our economy, contributing \$34 billion to our GDP and supporting more than 700,000 jobs across the province.

The food processing sector alone boasts almost 3,000 manufacturing businesses, providing job opportunities across the province.

Ontario's budget will help these industries expand and enable new ideas to get off the ground.

Small business start-ups and social entrepreneurs will be given the tools they need to take their ideas from the drawing board to global markets.

Ontario's budget will make it easier for young people to find jobs ...

And allow people across this province to travel more quickly and more safely.

I have spoken about what we will do to help create a more prosperous Ontario.

Now, I will speak about what we will do to help build a more fair society.

These two issues are closely linked.

When our government speaks about a fair society, I want to be clear about what that means in the context of our economy.

It means ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to find a job ...

Because Ontario's economy is stronger when everyone has the opportunity to be gainfully employed ...

To participate in the life of their communities ...

And to contribute to the prosperity of our province.

A fair society also means access to important public services.

Ontario is transforming health care services so that more people will quickly receive the care they need, when they need it, where they need it.

In the 2012 budget, we committed to increasing investment in home and community care by an average of 4% per year.

Ontario's 2013 budget proposes that we go farther—it would add an additional 1% per year—for a total increase of over \$700 million by 2015-16 compared to 2012-13.

Across Ontario, people need help getting to their medical appointments ...

They rely on mental health and addiction services in their communities ...

And they have complex medical needs that require nursing visits in their homes.

Ontario's budget would help ensure people get the care they need in their communities and in their homes.

We are also dedicated to improving health services for small, rural and northern communities ...

For aboriginal people, seniors and people living with mental health and addiction challenges, through the Health Action Plan ...

Because we all deserve the same great care, no matter where we live.

**1620**

At the same time, our government has been making investments in young people ...

To ensure they are prepared for both the challenges and the opportunities ahead.

Ontario is teaching its young about teamwork and critical thinking ...

It is building a workforce that is creative and entrepreneurial.

This sort of support starts in full-day kindergarten ...

Through smaller class sizes in the early years ...

To improved graduation rates in high school ...

And through programs such as the 30% off Ontario tuition grant and the new tuition-fee framework.

The province must continue to provide world-class education, adding to the many opportunities we have created together.

Ontario is not well served when people face barriers to employment.

That's why Ontario's budget would see us reduce barriers to employment for people who receive social assistance.

I want to thank Frances Lankin and Munir Sheikh for their excellent advice and insight.



As a result of their work, our government proposes to create a \$200 monthly earnings exemption for people who receive support from Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program ...

Because people deserve to keep more of the money they earn through their hard work.

We are proposing to increase social assistance rates by 1% ...

And to improve benefit levels for singles without children as well.

This is the group of social assistance recipients that experiences the lowest incomes.

Finally, the budget would increase cash and other liquid-asset limits for people who receive Ontario Works so they have more financial security.

Mr. Speaker, these changes are far-reaching and fundamental.

Above all, they're fair.

Without this reform, some people risk falling farther and farther behind ...

While, at the same time, becoming less likely to seek work, because the current system takes back some of the gains of employment.

Ontario's budget would put an end to that.

We also recognize that high auto insurance rates are putting pressure on families.

The cost is hard on people's wallets but it also presents a drag on our economy.

We will move to remedy that by proposing an average 15% cut in auto insurance rates.

As well, in the 2011 budget, our government introduced the Ontario Trillium Benefit, to assist low- to moderate-income families.

In our consultations we heard that some would like to choose between monthly payments or an annual payment.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario's budget offers that choice.

A fair society also recognizes that improved economic opportunities must ensure aboriginal people can work and thrive.

A new fund will offer support for housing needs to all low-income people in First Nation communities ...

And we will be providing an additional \$5 million to the First Nation, Métis and Inuit education policy framework.

A fair society protects those who are vulnerable, regardless of their income.

The government remains committed to helping those with developmental disabilities.

We will invest in reducing wait-lists, helping families in urgent need.

A fair society provides justice for all.

That is why we are committing additional support to Legal Aid Ontario, which will help low-income families, victims of domestic violence and others.

Part of ensuring a fair society is the security and safety of our citizens.

We are indebted to the men and women of our police services, who have dedicated their lives to protecting our families and communities.

That's why we will continue supporting our police with permanent annual funding for the Provincial Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy.

Ontario will also continue uploading the cost of social services from municipalities ...

Because it's the right and fair thing to do.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we must work with other provinces across Canada to secure fair transfer arrangements from the federal government.

Fiscal transfers that would ensure that the people of Ontario are getting their fair share.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear: Our government believes eliminating the deficit is the single most important step we can take to grow the economy and create jobs.

Eliminating the deficit makes resources available for strategic investments that will boost economic growth that leads to job creation.

As a result of our focus to balance the budget, the deficit projection for 2013-14 is \$11.7 billion ...

An improvement of more than \$1 billion from what was projected in last year's budget.

This would be the fifth year in a row that Ontario's deficit projection would be lower than the original forecast.

Program spending in 2013-14 is being held to the same level as projected in the 2012 budget.

This shows our plan is working.

Yet, there is more to do.

I'm pleased to say Ontario is beating its fiscal targets, due in part to the transformation of how we deliver public services.

Over the last year, we began moving forward with about half of the 362 recommendations made by the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services.

This year, we will continue to move forward with a total of 60% of those recommendations.

We are also working to find savings in business support programs and refundable tax credits, as recommended by the Jobs and Prosperity Council.

The changes we put in place in 2009 have made Ontario's tax system very competitive.

Those changes will result in about \$8.5 billion in annual tax relief for businesses.

At the same time, the cost of Ontario's business tax credits is growing at a level that cannot be sustained.

So, we will receive advice within the next six months that will provide insight into the future of these programs ...

To ensure they are producing effective results that promote productivity and create jobs.

We are also working closely with the federal government to close tax loopholes and to combat the underground economy.

Taxpayers want a government that is accountable and delivering value.

These initiatives are part of the larger, ongoing transformation of delivering public services more effectively.

Mr. Speaker, we're focused on doing what is right ...  
And fair ...

To ensure everyone is paying their fair share to protect public services and eliminate Ontario's deficit.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario has many strengths.

In fact, we have over 13 million of them.

Because Ontario's strength is its people.

Their diversity ...

Their skills and knowledge ...

And their hard work.

And that's why, in the face of so many global economic challenges, we continue to outperform so many parts of the world.

Because our people are working hard ...

And working together ...

To provide a great quality of life for their families ...

And to strengthen their communities.

Et les gens se serrent les coudes...

Pour offrir une belle qualité de vie à leurs familles...

Et renforcer leurs communautés.

As a government, we can do no less.

That's why, as we move through a sensitive economic recovery, we're taking a balanced approach to eliminate the deficit and make smart investments for long-term economic growth.

That's why we are committed to helping all the people of Ontario enjoy the same opportunities.

That's why we are dedicated to building an Ontario that is prosperous ...

And fair.

An Ontario that is as inclusive ...

Accepting ...

And open ...

As the people who call it home.

And, with their help, we've put forward a budget that speaks to their priorities ...

Their values.

The principles of this budget come from the people.

They have had a lot to say.

What they are telling us is that they want their government to move forward on their priorities ...

The budget also speaks to the priorities of all parties in this House ...

Because despite our differences, we are united in our wish to help this province.

Working together—and only working together—can we achieve those priorities.

Working together, we can deliver this budget for the people of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Ontario are proud.

Proud of the way they've worked together through the worst global recession in 80 years.

Proud of the way they've worked together to protect public education and health care ...

And proud of our Ontario ...

Where there is room for everyone.

Room for everyone to compete, do business and succeed.

Room to learn.

And, above all, room to help each other.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Simcoe–Grey.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Wilson has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We will move to introduction of bills. The Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the House to revert to introduction of bills.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Agreed? We will.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### PROSPEROUS AND FAIR ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 POUR UN ONTARIO PROSPÈRE ET ÉQUITABLE (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Mr. Sousa moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 65, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 65, Loi visant à mettre en œuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister for a short statement.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I've spoken enough, Mr. Speaker. I have no statement at this time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Government House leader?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Milloy has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands recessed until Monday at 10:30.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Adjourned.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Adjourned. Recessed, adjourned. Tomato, tomahto.

*The House adjourned at 1634.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
		Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Millroy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakubski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉES PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craitor  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margarett R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











*Continued from back cover*

#### **Health care**

Mr. Ted Arnott .....	1769
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1770

#### **Services for the developmentally disabled**

Miss Monique Taylor .....	1770
Hon. Ted McMeekin .....	1770

#### **Visitor**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1771
-------------------------------------	------

### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

#### **Grey Bruce Singers**

Mr. Bill Walker .....	1771
-----------------------	------

#### **Tibet Day**

Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1771
------------------------	------

#### **Youth achievement**

Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	1771
---------------------------	------

#### **Environmental protection**

Mr. John O'Toole .....	1772
------------------------	------

#### **Health care**

Mr. John Vanthof .....	1772
------------------------	------

#### **Eva Chu**

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1772
-----------------------	------

#### **Wind turbines**

Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1772
-------------------------	------

#### **Elvenia Gray-Sandiford**

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1773
--------------------------	------

#### **Shirley Perry**

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	1773
------------------------	------

### **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

#### **Land use planning**

Mr. Frank Klees .....	1773
-----------------------	------

#### **Animal protection**

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1774
-------------------------------	------

#### **Agri-food industry**

Ms. Helena Jaczek .....	1774
-------------------------	------

#### **Fishing regulations**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette .....	1774
------------------------------	------

#### **Hydro rates**

Ms. Sarah Campbell .....	1775
--------------------------	------

#### **Agri-food industry**

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1775
-----------------------	------

#### **Ontario College of Trades**

Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1775
------------------------	------

#### **Radiation safety**

Mme France Gélinas .....	1775
--------------------------	------

#### **Air quality**

Mr. Steve Clark .....	1775
-----------------------	------

#### **Mining industry**

Mr. John Vanthof .....	1776
------------------------	------

#### **Air quality**

Mr. John O'Toole .....	1776
------------------------	------

#### **Long-term care**

Mme France Gélinas .....	1776
--------------------------	------

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

#### **2013 Ontario budget / Budget de l'Ontario de 2013**

Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1777
Debate adjourned .....	1781

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

#### **Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2013, Bill 65, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2013 pour un Ontario prospère et équitable (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 65, M. Sousa**

First reading agreed to .....	1781
-------------------------------	------



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 2 May 2013 / Jeudi 2 mai 2013

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Local Food Act, 2013, Bill 36, Ms. Wynne / Loi de 2013 sur les aliments locaux, projet de loi 36, Mme Wynne

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	1749
Mr. John Vanthof .....	1750
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	1750
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1750
Mr. Jonah Schein .....	1750
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	1751
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	1751
Mr. John Vanthof .....	1753
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	1753
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1753
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1753
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	1754
Mr. Frank Klees .....	1754
Mr. Jonah Schein .....	1755
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1755
Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	1755
Mr. John Vanthof .....	1756
Mr. Frank Klees .....	1756
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1756
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	1758
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	1758
Mr. Rod Jackson .....	1758
Mr. John Vanthof .....	1759
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1759
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1759

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Steve Clark .....	1759
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	1759
Hon. Teresa Piruzza .....	1760
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	1760
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1760
Mr. Michael Prue .....	1760
Mr. Kim Craiton .....	1760
Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1760
Mr. John O'Toole .....	1760
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1760

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Government's record

Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1760
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1760

### Government's record

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1761
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1761

### Ontario budget

Mr. Michael Prue .....	1762
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1763

### Power plants

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1763
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1763
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	1764

### Power plants

Mrs. Julia Munro .....	1764
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1764
Mr. Bill Walker .....	1764

### Municipal planning

Ms. Catherine Fife .....	1764
Hon. Linda Jeffrey .....	1765

### Public transit

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1765
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	1765

### Hydro charges

Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1766
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	1766

### Environmental protection

Mr. Jonah Schein .....	1766
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	1766

### Post-secondary education

Mr. Grant Crack .....	1767
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	1767

### Waste diversion

Mr. Michael Harris .....	1768
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	1768

### Correctional facilities

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	1768
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1768

### Protection for workers

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	1769
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	1769

*Continued on inside back cover*

No. 36



N° 36

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

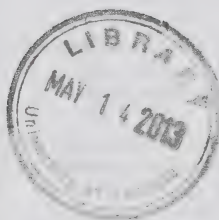
Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Monday 6 May 2013

Lundi 6 mai 2013



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 6 May 2013

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 6 mai 2013

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Today the captain of the pages is Anjali Sharma. She lives in Markham–Unionville. I would like to welcome her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jag Sharma, to the House today.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It's my pleasure to welcome representatives from the Hearing Foundation of Canada to Queen's Park: Dino Sophocleous, president; Gael Hannan, program specialist; and Janice Eales, manager of development and programs. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Rick Bartolucci:** I know they're on their way in, but our page captain Megan Gauvreau wants to welcome her father, Sam Gauvreau—Sam was a page here 30 years ago; her mother, Mary Sabo; her sister, Colleen Gauvreau; her uncle, Paul Sabo, who's joining us—Paul has the distinction of being coached by me in basketball, and he almost made the pros; and cousin Lidija Rasa. They're all here to support Megan Gauvreau, who helped ensure that this set of pages set a new record when they delivered the budget.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, on a short point of order: It has to deal with the use of props in the Legislature. Shortly before I came into the Legislature today, a member of the opposition challenged the wearing of this particular tie, saying that it was a prop. It's a tie that some people mistake as an Ottawa Senators tie. I just want confirmation that it's appropriate for me to wear this tie which features some Roman centurions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I can't quite tell if that's a point of order, a point of interest, a point of bragging or a unanimous consent to wear the tie. I'm not sure which one it is, so I'm just going to leave it alone.

Further introductions?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I'm pleased to let members of the assembly know the following people are here from the regional municipality of Niagara for Niagara Week: the regional chair, Gary Burroughs; Pelham's mayor, Dave Augustyn; Niagara Falls's mayor, Jim Diodati; Councillor David Barrick; Councillor Barbara Greenwood; Councillor Bruce Timms; the chief administrative officer, Mike Trojan; Ken Brothers; Debbie Elliot;

Patrick Robson; Diane Simovic; and Matt Robinson. Welcome to the Legislature today.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, I would like us all to extend a warm welcome to all of the Maple Leafs fans who are watching us today and who are celebrating the Leafs' victory and the predicted victory for tonight.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would ask Hansard to duplicate my answer to the member from Newmarket–Aurora, as I did to the Minister of Energy, which I'm now going to do to the member from Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to be rising today after a blow-out game in which the Ottawa Senators defeated roundly the Montreal Canadiens last night. I echo my colleague from Ottawa Centre and Ottawa West–Nepean. We may not be united today on the floor of this House, but rinkside, we are united behind the next Stanley Cup champions, the Ottawa Senators.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I only promise to carry this on if this jocularity continues during question period. I'm not sure if I need to continue.

The Minister of the Environment, please.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to inform members of the Progressive Conservative caucus that they should be supporting their leader, who is a Boston Bruins fan. I'm not trying to detract from his support of the Boston Bruins.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean–Carleton might want to know that I've been, since birth, a Montreal Canadiens fan, so I don't know if I can carry on with this.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** That explains it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I could be in deep trouble.

I do have some guests to invite us to welcome. We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today a delegation from the Education and Culture Committee from the Parliament of Finland. We are welcoming them here to learn about our education system.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, in Thursday's budget you put your foot on the accelerator of government spending and deeper debt



when you should have hit the brakes and headed in the other direction altogether. Let me put this into perspective: If that Liberal budget were to pass, that means a little girl born in the province of Ontario tomorrow will have \$20,000 of provincial debt on her back—the moment she comes into this beautiful world, Speaker, \$20,000 in provincial debt on her back because we couldn't make the decisions to live within our means today. By the way, Speaker, that's doubled under the Liberal government.

1040

Premier, don't you think it is morally wrong to slap \$20,000 on the back of a newborn child in this province simply to keep the Liberal Party in power?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That little girl born today, when she turns four or maybe even three, if she's born late in the year, she'll be able to go to junior kindergarten full days, Mr. Speaker. That little girl, if she's born today, her family will have access to the best medical care in the world. That little girl, if she's born today, she'll be able to grow up into an excellent post-secondary education system that I hope, by the time she's there, will have a better connection with the workforce so she'll be able to find a job in this beautiful province of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I can change channels, too, so let's just keep it down.

Supplementary, please.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I think the problem here is that the Liberal government is failing basic economic math here, Speaker: \$11 billion is the debt interest payment each and every year, \$11 billion that could go to build stronger universities and colleges; \$11 billion that could go into building subways and highways and opening up new jobs in our province.

Instead, you're spending \$11 billion to send to largely overseas lenders, Premier. Don't you think that that shows a government that's become morally bankrupt, when \$11 billion that could go to health, could go to education, could go to transportation, is actually going overseas to our lenders instead of helping that child grow into a province where she has good job opportunities and a healthy future? You can't build future prosperity on a foundation of debt. Doesn't the Liberal government understand that basic premise?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We have a plan to eliminate the deficit by 2017-18. I am very confident in the ability of the businesses in this province to work with us to create jobs. What this budget is about is creating the conditions to create jobs in the province, to work on the issues that affect people's everyday lives and to invest in the future, so that that child who is born today has all of the advantages that he or she deserves. That's what this budget is about.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to say to the party opposite that there are initiatives in this budget, like the acceleration of the capital cost allowance, that will create opportunities for business in this province. I would have

expected that the party opposite would have been supporting that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** You know, Speaker, I think the Premier understands that the capital cost allowance acceleration is a federal initiative under Prime Minister Harper that you're simply emulating here.

Speaker, back to the Premier: You know, it's telling that within days of the most recent Liberal budget that increased spending and brought our debt hole even deeper, we saw two more—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, come to order.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —manufacturing plants close up. Waterloo lost a furniture company, 200 and some jobs now going to Michigan. Caterpillar has now closed down their second plant in the province of Ontario. I know, Premier, that you've dismissed the loss of manufacturing jobs as—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Cambridge, your leader is asking a question.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —but certainly in light of the latest two closures and the men and women who are now out of jobs in our province, doesn't this tell you that your budget and your plan are actually on the wrong track and we should go down a different direction altogether?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know it's always painful for families, for workers, when businesses leave, when jobs are lost. But the reality is, we've regained more than 400,000 jobs since the economic downturn.

It seems to me that it is even more imperative that we have a plan in place—and the member opposite talks about the capital cost allowance. If this budget doesn't pass, our part of that equation will not be in place, and it's very important for businesses. It's the number one ask of businesses in the province, particularly manufacturing.

I would suggest that if the Leader of the Opposition is interested in economic growth and stability and job creation, he would read our budget and he would support it.

## ONTARIO BUDGET

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier, Speaker: Premier, I think we'll respectfully disagree. When I talk to business owners, managers and workers, the number one advice I get from them is that it's time to change the government in this province and it's time to go down a very different path in Ontario.

Back to my illustration on the fact that your Liberal spending budget will put \$20,000 on the back of a newborn child in the province—by the way, that has doubled under the Liberal time in office; or nearly doubled, to be perfectly accurate about it. But, Premier, I think you understand also that people don't lend us that

money for free. They don't simply hand it over; we need to pay it back, plus interest. That means that our overseas lenders are using that money, the billions of dollars, to invest in their own subways, to invest in their own highways, to invest in their own post-secondary education. So when that little girl grows up, she's going to have a tougher time getting a job because those jobs will go somewhere else.

Don't you understand what's at risk, Premier? When you think about the impact, the morally bankrupt approach of that much debt today, and then taking away future job opportunities, don't you think it's time to take a very different approach in our province: to focus on jobs and make government spend within its means?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I really believe that it's not an either/or proposition. For the fourth year in a row, we've beaten our fiscal targets. We're the only government in Canada to have done so. We are on track to do that again for a fifth year and we're on track to eliminate the deficit by 2017-18. That's very important to us and supporting business—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Northumberland, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** But if the Leader of the Opposition had his way, he would park all of the service enhancement, he would park the investments in the future for that young child, the baby who's either born today or the young child who is starting school today—and I don't believe we can do that. I believe that simultaneously we have to continue to be fiscally responsible, we have to stay on track to eliminate the deficit and we have to make sure that we continue our services, our education, our health care, our investments in infrastructure, because those are what guarantee that the future will be bright for that baby who's born today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier says that it's not an either/or proposition. I obviously disagree. It's either further decline or moving our province forward again. It's either staying deep in debt or actually building future prosperity for the great province of Ontario. It's either embracing, as the Liberals seem to do, that we're a haven-not province with hands out for payments or actually saying that our great province of Ontario can actually lead again—the best in jobs, the best for business—and in so doing, the support we could have for important public services.

Premier, the choice is very clear. You say on page 109 of your budget that you're actually going to dig a deeper deficit. I'm incredulous that at a time that we're so deep in debt, you're actually going to increase the size of the deficit, put us deeper into debt. You are condemning that child born into the world tomorrow to a less prosperous province of Ontario than we want to see. We want to see that Ontario recaptured again, that leads this great country of Canada. Premier, why don't you?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have huge confidence in this province, and the reason I do is because of our well-

educated workforce, because of the excellent health care and education systems that we support and because of our commitment to investing in infrastructure, creating jobs.

What the Leader of the Opposition does not outline is what the impact of the cuts that he would make would be. That would mean that we would be taking teachers out of the classroom, we would be reducing the support to people who are in need of health care, we would not be able to continue to invest in home care, and we would not be able to build the roads and bridges and make sure that the infrastructure in northern and rural Ontario is repaired and built as it needs to be. That is what is at risk if the Leader of the Opposition has his way. We're not going down that road.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Clearly this budget was nothing more than a blatant attempt to buy the support of the NDP. You chose to spend about a billion dollars to close gas plants in Mississauga and Oakville to save political hides of Liberal members in those areas, and now you're going to use, ironically, another billion dollars to try to buy support from the NDP.

I ask you again to think about that newborn child in our province tomorrow, whether she's born at Sunnybrook or in Niagara. We owe it to that child to make sure that we don't become the Greece of Canada. We don't want to become the California of this great country of Canada. We want to see an Ontario that's strong, prosperous and proud.

1050

Premier, I think you know this: that any government that spends beyond its means year after year after year is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —to decline. We want to surge ahead to a more prosperous, stronger province of Ontario, to spend within our means and bring jobs back to our great province. Premier, won't you do the same?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** In our budget, we're proposing a Youth Jobs Strategy, Mr. Speaker. What we believe is that it is really important that we put in place the supports for young people. We know that the youth unemployment rate is unacceptably high at 16.5%. It's unacceptable. We need to do something about that. That's the plan that we've put in our budget.

There are seniors who are waiting for home care. We have put in our plan money to address that need.

Those are issues that affect people every single day. They're not NDP issues, they're not Conservative issues, they're not Liberal issues. They are the issues that are confronting the people of this province. That's what this budget speaks to.

I really believe that that baby born today needs to be part of a family and part of a society that has opportunity. That's what this budget is about.



## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. As the Premier knows, her government signed an agreement with Ottawa to create a new tax loophole, starting in 2015, which will allow Ontario's largest corporations to write off their HST on entertainment and other expenses. Now, according to budget estimates at the time, this is going to cost Ontario about \$1.3 billion a year.

Last week, in advance of the budget, Ontario's Minister of Finance wrote to his federal counterpart in the hopes of delaying this plan until the budget is balanced. My question to the Premier: Is the Premier aware of any response yet?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm not aware of a response. As the leader of the third party said, the Minister of Finance has written to his federal counterpart, and we will continue to work with the federal government. The reality is that they collect 75% of Ontario taxes, and so we have to work with them.

But I think it's very important to reiterate what the Minister of Finance has said many times: This is not a loophole. It's not a tax break, it's not a tax giveaway and it's not new. This is something that has been on the books and has been known about. It wouldn't save \$1.3 billion, as the leader of the third party suggests.

I think what we're dealing with today is the reality that there is a budget that has been read in this House. There is a budget that now is on the table. I believe that it is time for all of the parties in this House to look at that budget and make a decision on whether they're going to support the budget or not.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** On Thursday, while many of us were in budget lock-up, Jim Flaherty, the federal Minister of Finance, was asked about the letter in the House of Commons. He said, "There is a long-standing agreement between the government of Ontario and the government of Canada on this issue. We are not going to abrogate that agreement...." Does this come as a surprise to the Premier, Speaker?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I said, we have been in contact with the federal government, and we will have that conversation.

But I really believe that we should talk about what is in the budget so that we can get some kind of read on whether the third party is interested in having that discussion and coming to a decision about what they're going to do.

This budget is about creating jobs. It's about helping people in their everyday lives. It's about every person in every region of the province having the supports that they need while we stay on track to eliminate the deficit by 2017-18.

This budget reflects the needs of the people in the province. We have connected with over 600,000 people at jobs round tables, in face-to-face town halls and in

tele-town halls. I really hope that the leader of the third party is going to work with us and get this budget passed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** In the budget lock-up, officials from the Ministry of Finance indicated that the request would not come as any surprise to the federal government. They knew that they'd be asked particularly about this corporate tax loophole. So I ask the Premier what the federal government said when they were told that this letter would be coming.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I don't know what they said, but I think it's a good thing that they knew that the ask was coming, because they know it's of concern to us, and we will be working with them.

But the reality is that there is another conversation that we need to be having, and that is about what is at risk if this budget does not pass. We need to understand that if this budget doesn't pass, then the enhancement to the Ontario child benefit will not go ahead; that the investment in a jobs strategy for youth will not go forward; that the investment in enhanced home care and making sure that home care gets to people when they need it will not go forward; that the investment in infrastructure in northern and rural Ontario—the roads and bridges fund—that will not go forward. All of that is at stake.

I do not believe the people of Ontario want an election at this point. I believe that they want to see these initiatives go forward. That can only happen if the support of this House will allow us to get this budget passed.

## ONTARIO BUDGET

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** To the Premier, Speaker: Unfortunately, this is exactly the sort of move that's making people very cynical about government, particularly this government. The government says it would be unfair to open this new corporate tax loophole while we're trying to balance the books—that's what the letter said. But instead of working hard to get that job done, the minister wrote a hasty last-minute letter the day before the budget was released. There was no mention of closing that \$1.3-billion loophole anywhere in the budget speech or the budget document.

Does the Premier understand that people want to see real results in this budget, not just empty promises that leave the same old status quo in place in this province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** This is not a loophole. It's not a tax break. It's not new, and we're working with the federal government to address it. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a large range of initiatives in this budget that speak to the needs of the people in the province, speak to the issues that I have heard, that my colleagues across government have heard about the need for jobs, particularly youth. The need for opportunities for youth to find internships and placements—that's what our youth strategy is about; the need for young people who want to start new jobs to have access to some capital and to have access to some advice around entrepreneurship and busi-

ness plans. Those kind of supports are part of our youth employment strategy, and I hope that the leader of the third party will be able to support that.

I believe that this is a time for decisiveness. There has been a lot of conversation, and we all know I believe in conversation, but now is the time to decide.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I've been hearing from a lot of Ontarians since this budget was tabled last week. Many people saw that that budget reflected New Democrat proposals to take a balanced approach to balancing the budget and to make life more fair for people. But they also see a government that constantly makes promises that they don't intend on keeping. Does the Premier understand why this kind of behaviour makes people cynical about politics?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've been part of a government that said we were going to bring in full-day kindergarten. We're doing that. I'm part of a government that said that we were going to invest in transit in the GTHA and beyond. We've done that, Mr. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek will withdraw.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm sorry. Now that I remembered what I'm supposed to do, would you please return to your seat to withdraw?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I withdraw, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Speaker, I'm part of a government that said we were going to reduce wait times in this province. We went from last to first in terms of wait times in our health care system.

We have delivered on the issues that we said we were going to work on and we will continue to do that if we can get this budget passed.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, people want to trust their government. We put forward some ideas to ensure that the budget would deliver for people and be accountable to them. But whether it's a failure to include a guarantee for home care wait times or any timelines at all to ensure that auto insurance premiums will actually come down in this province, whether it's hundreds of millions of dollars wasted on cancelled private power deals, on top of which we've seen hundreds of millions diverted to well-connected insiders, or the lack of any serious effort whatsoever to close the \$1.3-billion corporate tax loophole, people fear that they're going to be getting more of the same. Is the government ready to listen to some new ideas to make this budget more accountable and genuinely work for the people of this province?

1100

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm sorry; there has been ample opportunity for the people of the province and for the third party to give their input. To say at this point that

we have not listened borders on the ludicrous. If you look at our budget, you will see that we have addressed the issues that the NDP raised, largely because they were issues that we were concerned about too. That's a good thing; I've said that there was common ground, and there's common ground with the party opposite as well.

But to suggest now that we start all over again, that we start from scratch and build a new budget—it's just not going to happen. We have presented a budget. It is a responsible budget, it is an even-handed budget and it is a budget that is in the best interests of the people of this province. I hope that the third party will support us and we can get that budget passed.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister of community services, come to order.

New question.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, we've heard the story about the power plant documents. Can you assure us that there are no other cabinet documents that you've signed without reading or that you don't understand?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** It's always amusing to hear the Progressive Conservative Party ask about power plant documents. In an effort to be as transparent as possible, the Premier asked government members to put forward a motion which would have produced all documents related to the power plant over a very long period from a variety of ministries and agencies, the Premier's office and the Cabinet Office, covering exactly what she spoke of.

To the astonishment of everyone on this side of the House, the members of the Progressive Conservative Party and New Democratic Party voted against it. But you know, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to transparency, I guess the big question we have for them is, when are Progressive Conservative candidates going to appear in front of the committee? We have sent out numerous invitations, and yet they refuse to come forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'd like to readdress this to the Premier, because it's really a pretty simple question. You said last week that you'd signed a cabinet document without reading it, so I'll ask you again, what other cabinet documents are out there that you've signed without reading?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Again, the Premier was in front of the committee for, I believe it was, 90 minutes and answered a great number of questions related to documents related to the situation, but do you know what's very in-



teresting, Mr. Speaker? Do you know who we haven't heard from? The Leader of the Opposition.

Let me go through the chronology, Mr. Speaker. After they stood up and refused to apologize and threw out terms like "construction snitch" and "make sure the Premier doesn't play calendar," their Leader of the Opposition—talk about a double standard—was asked to come on April 30. All of a sudden, he was too busy. He wrote a letter that said maybe May 7 or the 14th, so we asked him for May 7, and do you know what, Speaker? He's too busy. Maybe May 14; who knows? When are we going to see the Leader of the Opposition, who appeared in his own YouTube video to talk about the cancellation of the plants, come before the committee? When are we going to see—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader and the member from Simcoe–Grey, come to order. New question, please.

## HOME CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Ontariens want to know that home care will be available when it is needed. They are looking for a guarantee that no one, no matter where they live in Ontario, will be forced to wait longer than five days, and they want the system to be funded responsibly, not at the expense of other health care services. Can the minister explain why her government is refusing to take these logical steps?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Quite the contrary: This budget is great for people who are advocating for more care for people in their own homes. In fact, we've had to make some difficult decisions along the way to get to the point where we can, in fact, invest more in the community sector.

Speaker, we estimate that 46,000 more people will have access to home care this year alone, thanks to this budget. We have been shifting. We are providing more care at home. It's where people want to be cared for. If they're ready to go home from hospital, we need to be there in their own home.

This is a really great budget for people who have been advocating for more home care.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** New Democrats' plan for home care would eliminate the wait-list for care, guarantee services for everyone within five days and fund these changes through savings, like a hard cap on CEO salaries. But the plan presented by this government not only leaves Ontarians without guarantees, it cuts hospital services in order to fund home care. Can the minister explain why her government refuses to introduce the

cost-saving proposal and instead cuts hospital care to fund home care?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What's important to me is that patients are getting the care that they need. If we can care for patients at home instead of in hospital—they're getting higher-quality care at home; it's where they want to be—then we have to be prepared to make the tough decisions to serve more people where they want to be cared for: at home.

That's what we're doing, and it hasn't been easy. You'll remember that we've had some difficult challenges to get to the point where we're able to make this investment. When we took on the price of generic drugs, I'm not sure I remember the opposition standing with us. When we had to have that difficult conversation with Ontario's doctors to hold that envelope steady, I don't remember opposition standing with us, supporting that decision.

It's because of changes like that that we have been able to really invest where patients need that investment, and that is in the home care sector and community care sector.

## HOME CARE

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is also for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The single most important thing to seniors in my riding of York South–Weston, and I believe all across Ontario, is their health and well-being. They want to know that they can access hospital care when they need it, drug prescriptions when they need them and home care when they need it. It is our responsibility to provide that balance.

Most seniors wish to remain in their homes as long as possible but sometimes need some extra help in order to do so. Can the minister please tell us what we are doing as a government to ensure that people who need care at home and in their community are able to access it?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I thank the member from York South–Weston for being a tireless advocate for providing better care for people in their own home.

We know that if we can deliver care at home, that's better for patients and it's better for our health care system. So whether people need help getting to the appointments—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Northumberland, come to order.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** —if they need resources for community mental health and addictions care—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, don't help him.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** —whether they need PSWs or nurses to come to their home, our commitment is very strong: Health care starts at home.

Our commitment in this budget will strengthen community. We'll be increasing funding by \$260 million,

beginning this year. That's growing to \$700 million if this budget passes.

This is a very important initiative in our health care system. I really do hope that members from all sides will understand how important this is to seniors in this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Thank you to the minister. Care at home and in our community does make a difference, sometimes a very big difference, in the lives of our seniors. My constituents are concerned about wait times for home care services. It's important that they get the services when they need them. Can the minister please tell us a little more about how long seniors have to wait, and how will the government be able to increase support to community health care?

1110

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The members who are heckling across the way might recall that the ask was for \$30 million. We're putting in \$185 million, Speaker—six times the commitment when it comes to dollars. These new investments will allow us to set the target of a five-day wait for people with complex conditions who need home care from a nurse or personal support worker.

We are demonstrating that we are standing with patients. We are standing with people who are asking for care to be delivered in their home. We have a five-day target for people, no matter where in the province they live.

Together, we can get this done. It's the right thing for the people of this province. We all benefit when people get the care they need in the right place.

## POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Premier, last week at the justice committee, we learned the gas plant scandal leads all the way to your office. You outlined eight cabinet interactions you had regarding the Oakville and Mississauga gas plant cancellations. You admitted that you personally signed off on one of the side deals that led to the \$275-million Mississauga cost, and you personally signed off on the arbitration agreement for Oakville in July 2011. You knew, Premier. Yet despite our questioning, you refused to tell us when you knew the tab for Oakville was more than \$40 million. Premier, is the reason for that because that would prove that you and your entire cabinet would be held in contempt?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier had, I believe, 90 minutes in front of the committee, and I think the most important thing to talk about when it comes to Oakville is the fact that she personally asked the Auditor General to look into it.

Let's go back to the arrogance of the Conservatives. The member from Leeds–Grenville stood and said to the

Premier—listen to this: “Next Tuesday you’ve been invited to appear before the justice committee. Will you confirm to the House today that you will order and instruct your staff to not play calendar or scheduling games?”

Now, Mr. Speaker, who's playing calendar and schedule games? On April 30, we requested the Leader of the Opposition to appear in front of the committee to talk about his costing, his estimates. He refused. On May 7, we asked him to appear in front of the committee. He had even written a letter saying that he was available. He has refused.

When are we going to (a) get an apology for the way in which they addressed the Premier, and (b) see the Leader of the Opposition—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Still no answer from the Premier on when. No answer equals contempt coming up; Speaker, I know that's a fact.

Premier, Ontarians are fed up with the obstruction and obfuscation we've seen from you, putting Liberal interests ahead of the people.

We've had Liberal witness after witness appear before the committee and continue to sidestep the truth. We've heard from a Liberal staffer that he illegally deleted emails. Today we've learned from an FOI request that the emails of the former chief of staff, principal secretary and deputy director of policy conveniently no longer exist and cannot be recovered from the tapes.

Premier, how can you condone this contemptuous behaviour of your government? Will you bring the confidence motion to the floor of this House for a vote?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. I ran through my Rolodex in my thesaurus head here, and I did know that the member said something that was unparliamentary. Could you withdraw, please?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I have a handy timeline here.

April 16: We requested four opposition candidates to testify, including PC candidate Geoff Janoscik, of robocall fame, and Zoran Churchin, the Mississauga East–Cooksville PC candidate. They all declined.

April 30: The Leader of the Opposition is asked to testify. He declines. Backup witnesses Janoscik and Churchin also decline. We then invited PC candidate Mary Anne De Monte-Whelan. She accepts, but a few hours before her testimony, she declines.

May 2: Janoscik, Churchin and De Monte-Whelan are called to testify. Janoscik tells the Clerk of the committee to “stop calling” him, and the other two do not respond.

Then, May 7: Once again—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke will come to order. Thank you.



Just wrap up.

**Hon. John Milloy:** May 7, we asked the Leader of the Opposition to appear before the committee, something he has indicated in writing—and yet again, he—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** My question is to the Premier. In 2010, this government slashed accident benefits to the tune of 70% in major areas in the GTA. The slashing of our benefits resulted in—I repeat—a 70% reduction in payouts in major areas in the GTA. Yet in three years, despite this reduction in payouts, hard-pressed drivers have yet to see a penny of those savings trickle down to them in the form of lower premiums. I ask this government, how long do they think people should wait for their premiums to actually go down?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I guess the easy answer to that is, “Support the budget,” because the moment you do that, that’s as soon as possible that we can start getting FSCO to get some teeth, to provide the oversight necessary to ensure that the costs that are saved in those claims can be translated into premium reductions.

We’re on the same page on that. We want to see that happen as soon as possible. We know we’ve been able to translate a portion of that already. We need to do more. We need your support to make it happen.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** The problem is that the budget bill does not include any timeline whatsoever for these reductions, so the 15% reduction in premiums could take two years, could take three years, could take five years. Nobody knows how long it will take.

After three years of waiting, after seeing the benefits slashed that consumers receive, how long does this government think people should wait to see the reductions come through in the form of lower premiums? I ask again, how long does this government expect consumers to wait to see a 15% reduction in auto insurance premiums?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I mean, the member opposite recognized the complexity of the situation. It’s why he put in his private member’s bill that it should be a gradual reduction, knowing that we need to take this in a very concerted effort.

We have to get at the root causes. We’re taking steps necessary—a couple of years ago—to go against the anti-fraud initiatives. We’re working now with the industry to ensure that we pass on those savings to the drivers, to the premium holders, to the consumers.

This is for the benefit of nine million drivers across Ontario. We recognize the importance of doing this. We recognize the importance of doing this quickly. It’s one of the reasons that in this bill we’re asking FSCO to reduce the ROE by 25%. That’s why we’re asking FSCO to provide the oversight necessary to work with the

industry to pass along those savings and forcing them to do so. It is why the industry is prepared to work with us, because together we’re going to reduce the costs of claims well beyond that which is existing in other parts of Canada.

#### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** My question is to the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. Every day, I speak with young people living in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River. They tell me about the number of challenges they face to entering the workforce and embarking on a career. These young people want to find meaningful employment that will take advantage of their skills, talents and knowledge.

We all know that the unemployment rate among young people is disproportionately high, and I’m concerned about the impact this could have on the long-term strength and sustainability of our workforce here in Toronto and in Ontario.

For our province to be competitive and for our economy to grow, we need to ensure that young people have opportunities to access good, meaningful jobs. Can the minister please explain the steps this government is taking to help our young people find good jobs and contribute to our economy and our communities?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I want to thank the member from Scarborough–Rouge River for his advocacy on behalf of young people, not just in his riding but right across this province.

I’m pleased to say that in Ontario’s 2013 budget, this government is making an unprecedented investment in our young people. We’re investing in programs that will help them find jobs and put their considerable skills and talents to work, to help grow Ontario’s economy not just now but for decades to come.

I want to thank the NDP for working with us—in fact, for bringing this issue to the fore early on. I have no doubt, as we find the exact way to make this program work, that we’ll continue to work together on this important issue.

1120

With an investment in our budget of \$295 million, our government will work with businesses to create 30,000 new jobs for young people in this province. I look forward to the member’s supplementary so I can provide more details about this important initiative.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** It is good to know that this government is committed to giving young people the boost they need to succeed. The initiatives that the minister mentioned to create opportunities are especially good for young people in Scarborough–Rouge River and across the province who are keen about finding meaningful employment.

Speaker, we know that the economy is changing, and today, more than ever before, young people need skills in entrepreneurship to allow them to start their own busi-

nesses. In my riding, I hear great and innovative ideas from youth who are ready to put their ideas into action and become job creators themselves.

Can the minister explain what this government is doing to expand opportunities to young people so they can succeed as entrepreneurs and contribute to the growth of Ontario's economy?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Our member is absolutely right: Our young people have the skills and creativity to become job creators themselves and to help to grow our economy and ensure that we stay competitive through the 21st century. As announced in the budget, as part of our Youth Jobs Strategy, we propose to create a \$195-million youth employment fund, which is a fund that's going to expand job opportunities for youth.

But we're going further. We propose to also create a youth entrepreneurship fund, valued at \$45 million over two years, that will support young entrepreneurs through mentorship, start-up capital and outreach. And we're going even further: We're proposing to create a \$30-million youth innovation fund to help put new innovation research into action, turning ideas into job creation.

Finally, there is a business-labour connectivity and training fund to help make connections and bridge those skills gaps so all our young people can have access to prosperity.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Premier. You only needed to go to a picnic, a walkathon, a bake sale or a ribbon-cutting this weekend to know that your government is in big trouble. No one believes your government didn't know everything about the gas plant cancellations and no one believes your government has any principles left after delivering a made-by-the-NDP budget.

You signed the memorandum to cabinet on the cancelled Oakville gas plant, which either means you have not been telling the whole story or your competency is in question. Now that you have demonstrated your disregard for the public, proven that you're not up to the job and lost the confidence of the people of this province, will you put our PC confidence motion to a vote?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would suggest that this question is actually even less relevant today than it was last week, because now the budget is before us, and that budget is a confidence motion by definition.

I really believe that the member opposite will have an opportunity to weigh in on her opinions around youth unemployment, more home care for the seniors and the people with disabilities in her riding, and infrastructure investments. She will have an opportunity to weigh in on all of those initiatives when she votes for the budget motion. I look forward to her support.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Big news flash: I won't be supporting that budget, haven't in my career, and I'll never

support that government after the devastation that they have put across the manufacturing sector in this province.

But I just want to say to this Premier, every game that she plays, every story that she stretches, every concession that she gives to the New Democrats to stay in power delegitimizes her in the eyes of everyday Ontarians. No one trusts you anymore. You said that the cancelled Oakville plant only cost \$40 million. That was off by 775%. You said that you didn't know the true cost, but David Lindsay, David Livingston, Shelly Jamieson, JoAnne Butler and Colin Andersen all say that's not true.

When will you either call our confidence motion to the floor of this assembly or go directly to the polls? Because the people of this province want to have their say on you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I think we have all been impressed with the openness of the Premier. When it comes to the Oakville plant, the Premier personally asked the Auditor General to come forward with a figure. The simple fact of the matter is, we learned at committee last week that there are now, I believe, four estimates for the Oakville plant and that we need the level of certainty that the Auditor General can bring forward.

We've heard of the move by the Premier to have Liberal members of the committee move a motion to make all documents available. She herself appeared when requested in front of the committee. In fact, the former Premier, the member from Ottawa South, will be appearing tomorrow.

But the real question is, where is the openness on the Progressive Conservative side? Where is the Leader of the Opposition when he's requested over and over and over again to appear? Where are the PC candidates who are refusing to appear? Because we want to hear about their analysis and their costing as they headed into the last election.

#### CASINOS

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Premier. Even the bookies in Toronto can't peg the odds on whether Toronto will hit the jackpot for hosting a casino. The Premier stood in this House and said—and I quote her—"There is no special deal for any municipality in the province." But media reports on the weekend suggest that the OLG is anteing up \$100 million for a downtown site. My question, is somebody bluffing or is this Liberal government laying a huge side bet on a Toronto casino?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you for the question. I'll reiterate again that there is no special deal for Toronto. Everyone in the province, every municipality, every region, everywhere that we're dealing with regards to the OLG transformation to try to bring in another billion



dollars more to build hospitals and to build schools and to help with our infrastructure—those transformational changes will continue, but not at the expense of any municipality. There is no special deal. We haven't landed on a formula as yet, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** As Kenny Rogers once sang, "You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em; know when to walk away, know when to run."

The OLG doesn't seem to be folding. They're not walking away, and they're not running. So it looks like they're at the table and getting set to raise the stakes for a Toronto casino to \$100 million. Is the Premier, is the finance minister ready to go all in now, even though the Premier said there would be no special deal for Toronto?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The member opposite can play all he wants, but we're not playing a game here. This is serious business. We recognize the importance this has for the province of Ontario; we recognize the importance this has for the people of Ontario. It's incumbent upon us to ensure that whatever we do is consistent, fair and transparent and the same right across the province. That's what we're going to be doing. What you're reading and what you're saying is speculation. I wouldn't bet on that.

#### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels.

I know that our government has made significant investments in emergency management, and we are committed to a safe Ontario for everyone.

Today marks the kickoff of Emergency Preparedness Week. This particular week gives us the opportunity to take the time and ensure that we are able to deal with an emergency, if and when one happens.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us what the government is doing to increase Ontarians' awareness and ability to face emergencies?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, let me say thank you to the good member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell and my parliamentary assistant.

Last year, we successfully responded to 24 declared emergencies. Through Emergency Management Ontario, we coordinated between provincial and federal ministries to provide the most efficient assistance to municipalities and First Nations communities that needed our help.

Municipalities also play a very important role. They set their emergency plan, and I encourage everyone to know about their community safety procedures.

Finally, I always say that emergency preparedness is not just the responsibility of your government; it's everyone's responsibility. So make sure that you have a plan. Make sure that you know about the plan of your municipality and especially have a survival kit ready.

1130

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Merci, madame la Ministre, pour votre réponse en détail.

I'm glad to hear that our government is actively promoting emergency preparedness by working collaboratively with municipal and federal governments.

Speaker, I've heard that there will be a focus on seniors this year for Emergency Preparedness Week, and it's very important that seniors are aware of potential dangers and know what they can do to be prepared in the event of an emergency. Seniors are sometimes the most vulnerable, and everyone needs to ensure their safety. Can the minister please tell us what we're doing to make sure that in the case of an emergency situation, our seniors have the tools and the knowledge to be safe?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Last Friday, I was in my riding at the Centre Pauline-Charon with the minister responsible for seniors, and I announced that this year we want to focus on seniors because they can be especially vulnerable during an emergency.

Mr. Speaker, EMO, in collaboration with the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, has developed a new emergency preparedness guide for seniors. This guide shows how easy it is to be prepared for different emergencies and outlines the circumstances that seniors should consider when they plan for an emergency.

I also want to encourage everyone to take part in this week and help build a safer community for all Ontarians.

It was very interesting, because the head of the francophone seniors in Ontario was there, and she told us that they have to be ready, but they also are grandparents—often, they babysit their grandson or granddaughter—and they need to be ready for them too. So it was a good message.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Rob Leone:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, I have a simple question for you based on the findings of the justice committee. With \$600 million in waste, a resignation of a minister and a former Premier, the failure to produce documents on three separate occasions and your refusal to say exactly how much the Oakville and Mississauga cancellation costs are, is there any reason why this Legislature should not find your government in contempt?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, it is a case where they can't take yes for an answer. The Oakville situation is one that is a concern to the justice committee. It's a concern to this government, and when the Premier assumed office, one of her first actions was to ask the Auditor General, an officer of this House, to look into it. She made herself available for 90 minutes in front of the committee, and the former Premier, the member from Ottawa South, is going tomorrow.

But I ask the member again, and perhaps he can address this in his supplementary, what are the Conservatives trying to hide? Why will the Leader of the Oppos-

ition not appear in front of the committee? Why will Progressive Conservative candidates who sent out thousands of pamphlets talking about how they were in favour of the cancellation of the plants, who had robo-calls, who appeared in YouTube videos with the Leader of the Opposition, who sent out tweets—why will they not appear in front of the committee and tell their side of the story?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rob Leone:** I think that the government House leader just said yes, that his government is in contempt of this Legislature. I can't believe it. But I'll ask the Premier once again.

Your numbers are wrong. You botched document dumps, and you haven't been forthright about what you knew and when. The people of Ontario have lost confidence in your government. We on this side have lost confidence in your government. The only people who seem to have confidence in your government are you and your government and half of the NDP caucus.

When will the Premier admit that her government botched this file and say "I am sorry" to the people of Ontario? Regret isn't enough; Ontarians demand an apology. Premier, will you look into the camera—you can choose the one over my right shoulder, but I think you might like the one over my left—and tell the people that you are sorry for what you've done to this province?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's review: The Premier assumed office, and she asked the Auditor General to look into the Oakville situation. She went to the opposition and offered a select committee. The opposition said no; they'd rather have a witch hunt against a former member of this Legislature who's now in private life. She offered to broaden the terms of reference of the committee, and it took them a week and a half to finally get back to us.

One of the first actions of the committee was for Liberal members, at the advice of the Premier, to go forward and ask for a complete look through government agencies and ministries to deliver documents. And you know what happened, Mr. Speaker? The official opposition voted against it.

The Premier made herself available for 90 minutes to answer all questions, as did the member from Ottawa South—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, boy, I wish I knew who said that. If the member is honourable, stand up and withdraw anyway.

Go ahead.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, all we are asking is the same level of co-operation from the Progressive Conservative Party: that they will make their candidates available, that they will make the Leader of the Opposition available, to talk about their support for the cancellation of the gas plants in the last election.

## HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Residents in London are deeply concerned about the cuts they are seeing in our local hospitals. London Health Sciences is eliminating 60 positions, as is St. Joe's health care. The one-of-a-kind rehabilitation pool at St. Joseph's is closing, and the hospital is warning of longer patient wait times for MRIs, PET scans and CT scans. Can the minister explain why her government is cutting care?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Well, Speaker, quite the contrary, and it's disappointing that the member from London—Fanshawe is not paying attention to the transformation that is under way in health care in London and across the province.

We are reducing ALC rates dramatically in London, because we are providing more care at home. If we can provide—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener—Waterloo and the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, come to order.

Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** What matters to me is that patients are getting the care they need, and if we can provide that care in their own home, where they want to be, then that is what I want to be doing. That's where I want to be investing.

If we can provide supportive housing, if we can provide day programs for people with Alzheimer's so they don't have to go into long-term care before they really need to, those are the investments that we must make to transform our health care system.

If you value universal health care—and I know we sure do value universal health care—then you'd support this—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I think I should have asked for the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek's help an awful lot earlier.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** New Democrats want to see improvements in our broader health care, like in home care, but we do not want to see this being done at the expense of hospitals. We provided this government with a plan to improve home care by guaranteeing service within five days and to fund these changes through savings like a hard cap on CEO salaries, but our advice was ignored. Can the minister explain why her government has refused to implement our cost savings proposals and is recklessly cutting hospital services?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, as I said earlier today, we have made some difficult choices when it comes to reducing the price of prescription drugs, when it comes to holding the line on physician compensation. These have been difficult issues, but we've done them for one reason and one reason only: so that we can expand



access to home care, we can support people in day programs, we can provide respite care. That is where the future of our health care system must go—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Okay, I am going to offer some help, and that is to the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. I'm going to warn him, and I'm going to also warn the Minister of Community and Social Services.

New question.

## JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Attorney General. I know that adjudicative tribunals play a vital role in Ontario's justice system. Tribunals help keep many disputes out of courts by using their specialized expertise to adjudicate on a wide variety of disputes in an independent and impartial manner. I also know that since 2010 this government has begun the process of clustering tribunals together in order to realize cost savings and efficiencies in this area. Mr. Speaker, could the Attorney General please tell us about the clustering process and how the people of Ontario stand to benefit from it?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** First of all, I'd like to thank the hard-working, dedicated member for this question. She's extremely hard-working on an annual basis.

Speaker, there are over 600,000 hearings held annually before our administrative tribunals in the province of Ontario. Since 2010, we've been clustering them together under the Ministry of the Attorney General. Through that, we are building a more effective, efficient and accessible system of justice by clustering all of these administrative and adjudicative tribunals. By allowing the tribunals to share resources, expertise and best practices while reducing duplication, clustering improves access to justice while getting better value for the taxpayers' dollars.

We know that it works, too. Feedback has been very positive from both the environmental and land tribunals in Ontario and the social justice tribunals. They've been clustered since the last two or three years.

In fact, the Drummond commission recognized that this ministry has benefited, in particular, from the co-location of offices, common administrative functions and procedural improvements. As a matter of fact—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** —Drummond said—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I don't want to hear what he has to say. Sit down.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1141 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Speaker, I would like to introduce all of the guests who were on the Queen's Park grounds

today and are currently in the building for Dutch Heritage Month. We have a great flag-raising, in which you participated on the front steps. I believe they're coming down here to the gallery shortly. We just want to make sure we included them and welcomed them to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you very much—to thunderous applause.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** On behalf of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, I would like to welcome to the Legislative Assembly a group from MicroSkills. I don't know if they're here yet, but they should be here shortly.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** They are up there? Oh, perfect. Oh, right there. MicroSkills is a non-profit, community-based organization in Don Valley East, and we welcome them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you for joining us. That's not the Dutch group.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** They're coming.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** They're coming. Oh, okay.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### VOLUNTEERS

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** On the heels of National Volunteer Week, I am pleased to rise today to recognize the outstanding contribution of volunteers in my riding of Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

On April 21, I had the privilege of attending the Kawartha Lakes community care volunteer appreciation awards in Fenelon Falls, recognizing individuals who have tirelessly donated their time and efforts to improve the lives of their fellow citizens. They have over 900 volunteers with Kawartha Lakes community care.

The very next day, Josie Linton, an inspiring young lady from Sunderland, was at Queen's Park to be presented with a youth volunteer medal by the Lieutenant Governor. Her outstanding efforts at making her community a better place have been an inspiration to everyone who knows her.

Last Friday evening in Lindsay, I participated in the presentation of the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. One hundred and thirty-nine volunteers from my communities, representing 37 different organizations, were recognized for their years of service to the community, ranging from five years to an incredible 64 years of service.

We cannot overestimate the importance of volunteerism in our society. One of the measures of a modern society's success and value is our willingness to extend a helping hand to our fellow citizens who may be in need of assistance. It's a commitment to offer our time and

effort to make our community a better place to live, work and play.

The volunteers of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock whom I've recently had the honour of recognizing are to be commended for all that they have done and all that they will still do to make their community and our society a better place.

### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** This past Saturday, I joined our leader, Andrea Horwath, to meet a group of inspiring men and women in London who are trying to save their hydrotherapy pool. It is located at St. Joseph's hospital and it's the only one of its kind in our city. The hospital wants to close it this summer because it can't afford to keep it open, but ultimately it may cost more in pain, disability and health care dollars to close the hydrotherapy pool than to keep it open. The pool has only been in use for 12 years. These extraordinary men and women are doing everything they can to save it in spite of the debilitating illnesses they struggle with each day.

I want to express my admiration for their tireless efforts. They have written letters to the hospital's managers and to the board of directors, and they started a petition collecting more than 500 signatures.

Lorraine Gray, who is 84 years old and has severe arthritis, wrote the following, "St. Joseph's hydrotherapy pool helps keep my muscles strong, and without it, I will soon be unable to do anything; a further burden on the health care system."

Deborah Hall is a 47-year-old former figure skater. After back surgery, she began to lose strength. Nothing helped. She was in bed "wasting away," she wrote. Then Deborah discovered the hydrotherapy pool program. "It's working," she writes.

This group of brave men and women are doing everything they can to keep St. Joseph's hospital hydrotherapy pool open, and now I believe it's the government's turn to step in and do its part.

### CANADA'S WONDERLAND

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I'm happy to be here today to announce that Canada's Wonderland reopened for the season just this past weekend. As many of you know, Canada's Wonderland is located in my community, in my riding of Vaughan. As the MPP I'm extremely proud to have one of the country's biggest and best attractions in my own backyard.

What's great about this theme park is that it truly has something for everyone. Families and friends can enjoy countless rides, attractions and even live entertainment throughout the summer months. Attractions like these give us a unique opportunity to spend much-needed time with our loved ones.

Also of particular importance about the reopening of Canada's Wonderland is the tourism that it will bring to

my community of Vaughan. Millions of people visit this park on a yearly basis to take in the sights, and this means increased travel to Vaughan and the surrounding areas. Increased tourism allows local businesses to flourish and ensures that our province's economy continues to grow and strengthen.

I'd like to take a moment and recommend that members of this House who have an eye for adventure take some time during the break and over the coming months to visit Canada's Wonderland. I know that I, for one, am excited to take my daughters there this summer. I look forward to seeing all of you in Vaughan in the near future.

### NORFOLK ARTS CENTRE EXHIBITION

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** There's a meticulous collection of paintings and drawings at the Norfolk Arts Centre in Simcoe that all should see, particularly those of Dutch heritage. It's titled *Immigrant*, by Rosemary Slood.

Like many Dutch families in the post-war decades, the Sloods travelled to Canada on the *Waterman*, a Dutch immigrant ship that sailed from Rotterdam to Canada. They arrived in 1952. Rosemary was born just two months later.

The exhibition should appeal to anyone who wants to understand the eternal pull that the immigrant experiences—between old and new, between there and here—regardless of ethnicity. In her highly accomplished and at times almost photographically realistic style, Ms. Slood's paintings bring the emotions of the immigrant and his burden. We should be thankful to Ms. Slood for rescuing a forgotten era—a forgotten tragedy, in many cases—from obscurity.

Ms. Slood's collection encompasses the dress, the objects, the letters, and Dutch post-war images—the years when every Dutch family had one of those paraffin burners that we see. The inscriptions "*Origineel*" and "*Ned. Fabriikaat*" on the burner speak volumes. Rosemary's exhibition speaks to the common universal themes of loss, uprootedness, family, sacrifice, persistence, hope and faith.

This visual story of Dutch immigration is a must-see. I invite all to visit the gallery during Dutch Heritage Month.

### FLOODING IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

**Mr. John Vanthof:** This year in northern Ontario and probably most of the province, we didn't have a spring. We went from a very cold, snowy winter to summer, and that has caused—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** No, no. It's a serious issue. Because of that, we're having big issues like Parry Sound had, but now we're having it in my part of the north. I'm doing this statement on behalf of Mr. Bisson because Mr. Bisson is dealing with it as we speak, in Timmins, Moosonee and Kashechewan. I'd like to direct the Legis-



lature's attention to the flooding problems that are happening across the province to the north. In my riding, OPG controls the dams, and that's a big problem.

I'd like to commend the local mayors for doing what they can, especially the mayors of Elk Lake, Glasford and Temiskaming Shores. Temiskaming Shores has also declared a state of emergency, not because they're under immediate flood threat but because they're taking in people who are being flooded out from Moosonee.

I'd really like this Legislature to know what's going on and to know where my colleague, Mr. Bisson, is. Thank you for your attention.

### BIRMINGHAM BANK BED CHALLENGE

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** As you can tell, it was a sunny weekend in Oakville this weekend. I had the opportunity yesterday to participate in the eighth annual Birmingham Bank Bed Challenge for the Oakville Hospital Foundation.

Along with my fellow judges—the foundation's CEO, Tina Triano; Dr. Hanif Jamal; and Halton Regional Police Constable Leslie Baylis—I watched local banks wage a friendly competition by racing hospital beds in front of hundreds from the community.

1310

Throughout the month of April, Oakville's six major banks—BMO, CIBC, HSBC, Royal Bank, Scotiabank and TD Canada Trust—were challenged by the late Bruce Birmingham to raise money at their local branches to purchase beds for the new Oakville hospital. This year's event, held at Oakville Place, raised more than \$143,000 and helped the challenge surpass the \$1-million mark.

In addition to my judging duties, I had the opportunity to update the community on the construction of the new hospital and tell them that it's on time and on budget. At last year's event, I was able to tell the people that cranes would soon be appearing on the site. Less than a year later, the hospital has already reached its highest point.

Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Betty Birmingham and the Oakville Hospital Foundation for their ongoing work, and all six banks that participated yesterday, with a special mention to Scotiabank, the all-around winner of this incredible event.

### MENTAL HEALTH

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** It's my honour to rise this afternoon to mark Mental Health Week and speak to an issue that I personally am very passionate about.

In our current system, mental health has been consigned to the shadows. People with mental illnesses are stigmatized, misunderstood and even blamed rather than helped. And the scope of mental health problems is astounding: one in five Canadians experiences a mental illness, and up to 70% of mental health problems begin in childhood and adolescence. Meanwhile, our aging population is increasingly vulnerable to mental health challenges.

But, in Ontario, we have no coherent mental health care system. Rather, care is scattered over 10 ministries and thousands of agencies.

As representatives, most of us in this House know of the struggles that Ontarians endure as they try to find care for themselves or for family members. Last week, Amanda Telford left her son Philippe at a government agency office because she could no longer care for him. Philippe has severe autism, Tourette's syndrome and the intellectual capacity of a two-year-old.

As a social worker, one would imagine Amanda Telford would know where to find care for Philippe, but the reality is that there are simply not enough services to help people like the Telfords. As a government, we need to deliver more and better services to Ontarians with mental illnesses and intellectual challenges, and this care must be made an integrated part of the overall health care system.

There's a lot of work to be done, but we are well poised to make a difference, and we should start now, during Mental Health Week.

As Clara Hughes would say, "Let's talk." She's a huge mental health advocate. Let's follow her example. Let's talk this week.

### ANNIVERSARY OF POLISH CONSTITUTION

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** On May 3, 1791, the Polish people gave a priceless gift to Europe: the first constitution rooted in democratic principles in Europe and the second one in the world, after the United States. For this act of courage and progress, Poland and her people were rewarded with hostile political and military responses from her neighbours and nobility, scared of the notion of giving power to ordinary people, leading to the eventual wiping out of Poland from the world map for 123 years. Yet, fittingly, it is this very document, this very constitution, that became a beacon of hope for the Polish people throughout her darkest years of history. In times of despair, in times when everything seemed hopeless, the Polish people never gave up their dream of a democratic and free Poland inspired by this constitution.

This historic day, called Polish Constitution Day, was celebrated by the Polish-Canadian community over the weekend across Ontario. In Mississauga, I attended a moving and beautiful ceremony at the Maximilian church—a beautiful mass, followed by a parade and the raising of the Polish and Canadian flags.

There was another ceremony at Queen's Park, where it was so touching to see veterans who'd fought in World War II walking up University Avenue to Queen's Park to celebrate the very historic day.

It's important to recognize this not just because it's important for Poland, but because it's important for our young to remember this, because those who forget their history are destined to repeat it.

## SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Today, I rise to recognize contributions of Ontario's South Asian community, as we mark May as South Asian Heritage Month. I'm proud that this month was initiated by a former Ontario PC MPP, Raminder Gill. South Asian Heritage Month is an opportunity to recognize the countless contributions made by Ontario's South Asian community since the start of the 20th century.

As I've mentioned many times in this House, I've had the opportunity to meet with leaders in the South Asian community. Whether visiting small businesses, Diwali celebrations in Brampton, partaking in Punjabi International Film Festival celebrations, or walking the Nagar Kirtan here in Toronto a couple of weeks ago, I feel the strong sense of unity exhibited by this community.

From our belief in strong families to our vision that Ontario should always be a place where our children have better opportunities than we did, there are many shared values between the South Asian community and conservatives across Ontario. Your values are our values.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to celebrate Vaisakhi, Diwali, birthdays and more in our South Asian community over the past year. We share common interests as members of the Commonwealth. Canadian soldiers from Belleville and Trenton and Indian soldiers from Mumbai have bled together in peacekeeping missions around the world. So great is our belief in the institutions of democracy that we have sacrificed together.

On behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the Ontario PC caucus, I want to thank the South Asian community for their extraordinary contributions. I look forward to working with you for many years to come.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

## EDUCATION WEEK

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Today we mark the official kickoff to Education Week in Ontario. I am proud to stand up today to applaud the excellent work of students, teachers, principals, support staff and parents in our publicly funded schools. We know that Ontario's school system is among the best in the world, and our students are leaders across the country and around the globe.

Over the past nine years, we have seen significant improvements in student achievement, and I would like to thank our many partners in education for making this possible.

This year, our theme for Education Week is "From Great to Excellent in Education." It is fitting because, together with our education partners, we are building on our momentum and moving our education system from great to excellent. Test scores are up, class sizes are down and our graduation rate continues to rise.

Some 83% of our students are now graduating, up from 68% in 2003. That's amazing, and it means that 115,500 more young people are on a completely different path than they would have been without a high school diploma.

Ontario students continue to be high achievers, with 70% of grades 3 and 6 students mastering reading, writing and math skills. The number of students reaching the provincial standard is up by 16 percentage points compared to 2003.

Speaker, we can all be proud of these achievements.

We also continue to move toward a more innovative learning environment, one that includes greater attention to early education. I'm pleased to say that full-day kindergarten is now available to half of Ontario's four- and five-year-olds, and the program will be fully implemented by 2014.

We're preparing our children to be the workforce of the future by beginning the next phase of innovative education reform, with our focus on 21st-century teaching and learning. This will ensure the educational experiences of our students prepare them for the increasingly competitive global economy.

We've built an education system that is the envy of the world, but it's time to take the next step. We will be engaging with Ontarians to ask questions, create discussion and set out a plan to achieve excellence in our publicly funded education system.

Today, we'll kick off a number of fun activities planned in schools across the province. This week-long celebration is a perfect opportunity for students, teachers, principals, support staff and parents to applaud the excellent work that happens in our schools each and every day.

1320

I would like to thank our teachers, support staff, administrators and school boards for continuing to put students first and for making Ontario a leader in the education sector.

To my colleagues, I hope you will have the opportunity to visit your local schools and communities to celebrate the wonderful work happening all across this province.

## DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Today I rise to celebrate, with our colleagues, May as Dutch Heritage Month in Ontario. First, I would like to take a moment to congratulate His Majesty Willem-Alexander on becoming the new King of the Netherlands following the abdication of his mother, the much-loved Queen Beatrix, after a 33-year reign. I know that all of us within this chamber wish the new King well.

Canada and Ontario have long shared a special relationship with the people of the Netherlands and those of Dutch heritage. Over the course of the Second World War, during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands,



Canada provided shelter to Princess Juliana and her daughters.

It was during this refuge that Princess Margriet was born. The Canadian government designated the maternity ward of Ottawa Civic Hospital, which is located in my riding of Ottawa Centre, as international territory so that the princess would not be born in another nation state, and thus would inherit Dutch citizenship from her mother.

The Netherlands celebrates Liberation Day on May 5 each year. This is a day that marks the end of the oppression in the Netherlands, suffered for five years during the Second World War, and a return to liberty for the Dutch, freedoms which Canadian soldiers gave their lives to help achieve during the Second World War.

In 1945, the Dutch royal family sent 100,000 tulip bulbs to Ottawa in gratitude. The following year, the royal family sent another 20,500 tulip bulbs, requesting that a display be created for Ottawa Civic Hospital. They promised to send 10,000 more tulip bulbs each year to Ottawa.

This display has grown into the Canadian Tulip Festival, which is celebrating its 61st edition this year in Ottawa from now to May 20. It is the largest tulip festival in the world, and attracts 600,000 visitors annually.

I would like to take a moment to express my thanks to the current Dutch ambassador, Mr. Wim Geerts, who, on the weekend, helped launch his last tulip festival in Canada. Ambassador Geerts has dedicated his time and service to many causes in Canada, and in Ottawa in particular, some of which being the promotion of cycling in our community and equality for the LGBT community. I wish the ambassador all the best in future endeavours and thank him for his involvement in our community.

Today, there are almost half a million people of Dutch heritage living in Ontario, including three current members of the Legislature: our Attorney General, Mr. John Gerretsen; the MPP for Oxford, Ernie Hardeman; and the MPP for Timiskaming—Cochrane, Mr. John Vanthof.

The Dutch national spirit and work ethic have enriched Ontario beyond measure and will continue to do so in the years to come. The bonds between Ontario and the Dutch have been established and are strengthened through our shared values: building strong communities and fair societies for the benefit of all.

Ontario's Dutch-Canadian community has made a tremendous contribution to Ontario's economic, social and cultural well-being. On behalf of this chamber, I call on all Ontarians to join us in celebrating Dutch Heritage Month.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses.

#### EDUCATION WEEK

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** It is my pleasure to rise today on behalf of Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus and recognize the 83rd annual Education Week.

High-quality education is paramount to an individual's success in today's global economy. Literacy, numeracy

and science skills are increasingly important for individuals to be successful in today's job market. Therefore, it is vital that we ensure curriculum and teaching approaches foster skill development in these three critical areas.

It's also important that financial literacy is more thoroughly incorporated into provincial curriculum. This is an area where we can look to education stakeholders for feedback on programs that will be the most beneficial to our young people. The Jr. Economic Club of Canada, the Investment Funds Institute of Canada, the Financial Planning Standards Council and Junior Achievement Canada are all education stakeholders that already have successful, established financial literacy programming that can easily be incorporated into our formal education curriculum. Ensuring financial literacy is entrenched within our education curriculum will create two important spinoff effects: first, that we produce well-rounded students that are prepared for the financial obligations and challenges of adulthood; second, that we will have helped instill the financial understanding necessary to foster the entrepreneurial spirit in our future leaders.

Individual students have different aspirations and career ambitions. It is time to ensure our students are aware of the in-demand careers within our economy. Post-secondary education does not merely comprise the pursuit of a university degree; for some students, it means pursuing a college diploma or trades training. We need to ensure our children are aware of all of their options and that these options reflect our labour force's needs so that student success becomes community success.

It is imperative that we allow our principals, teachers and support staff the authority to make decisions that will be most beneficial to the success of their individual schools. Decisions such as class sizes and teaching approaches are best determined by the people who work with our children each and every day. Our principals and teachers understand their schools and our children. Let's allow them to tailor a program that will be the most beneficial to our students.

As a former teacher, I wish to extend a sincere thank you to all of the dedicated teachers, principals and support staff who work in the education sector. Thank you, and happy Education Week.

#### DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** This morning, I was pleased once again to be part of the Dutch flag-raising ceremony here at Queen's Park to celebrate Dutch Heritage Month. I want to recognize Consul General Hans Horbach, who is at Queen's Park for this auspicious occasion.

Dutch Heritage Month was created in 2011 through a private member's bill by PC MPP Elizabeth Witmer. I want to thank her for her leadership on that and for participating in the flag-raising ceremony this morning. I also want to thank my fellow colleagues of Dutch heritage who spoke: the member from Kingston and the Islands and the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane.

As I was on the boat from the Netherlands with his mother, I can attest to his heritage.

As you know, yesterday, May 5, the Netherlands celebrated Liberation Day. This is the day we commemorate the liberation of the Netherlands during the Second World War. My parents lived in the war zone, and I remember my mother describing the jubilation they felt when the soldiers—mostly Canadians—came. I believe it was one of the reasons that they chose to emigrate here with their 15 children.

It was a difficult journey, but we came because Canada was a land of opportunity. When we arrived in Ontario, we were welcomed by the Dutch community. It was not an easy time, and without the help of our neighbours and the community, I'm not sure how we would have made it.

Although we're all strong Canadians and Ontarians, many Dutch have retained a strong sense of Dutch heritage. In my riding of Oxford, in Niagara and in other parts of Ontario, there are strong Dutch communities that celebrate our traditions and still provide welcome and help for new immigrants.

This year, we have another reason to celebrate. Last week, we recognized the birthday of Queen Beatrix and the investment of a new King of the Netherlands, Willem-Alexander, and his wife, Queen Maxima. On behalf of the PC caucus, I want to offer our best wishes for a long and successful reign. Hartelijk gefeliciteerd.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to add on that that we're personally pleased at the name of the new king of Holland as that is also the name of one of my grandsons. With that, thank you very much for allowing me to present this here today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's a no-brainer. Responses?

#### DUTCH HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's an honour to stand in this House on behalf of the NDP caucus and recognize Dutch Heritage Month. About a million Canadians are of Dutch heritage, with half of them living in Ontario. Ontario has long been a preferred destination for Dutch-speaking immigrants, beginning with the Loyalists who fled New York and New Jersey in the 1700s.

The end of the Second World War saw another wave of Dutch immigration. Holland had been occupied and destroyed during the war. The Dutch had suffered terrible conditions, and in early May 1945 were liberated by Canadian divisions of the Allied forces. May 5 is celebrated in Holland and by the Dutch around the world as Liberation Day, and Canadians are still deeply respected as the liberators.

1330

The Canadian government provided safe haven to members of the Dutch royal family during the war years and, to show their appreciation, the Dutch government continues to support the Tulip Festival in Ottawa. This has further cemented a bond between the Netherlands

and Canada, a bond created by a shared belief in democracy and a monarchy. Congratulations to King Willem-Alexander on his ascension to the throne, and Queen Maxima.

My father was a teenager during World War II. He immigrated to Canada because of the deep respect that he had for the Canadian soldiers and the country that they represented. My parents were among thousands of Dutch immigrants who came to Ontario in the 1950s to build a better life for their families.

Another wave of Dutch immigration started in the 1980s. Farmers were once again running out of space and opportunity in Holland, and many came here to give their families a chance to grow. My wife came in 1986, and Speaker, I know from experience that this wave of Dutch people are as hard-working as any that preceded them. If you take a drive down the concession roads of rural Ontario, you will see many farms and small businesses with Dutch names on the mailbox. Dutch people are known as farmers, gardeners and builders, and, judging by the look of the Ontario countryside, they are good at it.

People of Dutch heritage are proud Ontarians, and we continue to be very grateful as a people for the opportunities that this province has provided us, although we still can't understand why other Canadians prefer hockey over soccer. On behalf of all those who immigrated here from Holland and all their descendants, I would like to say thank you. Hartelijk bedankt.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That statement will get you brownie points from your wife.

#### EDUCATION WEEK

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I'm responding on behalf of my colleague the member from Toronto—Danforth, who unfortunately has not arrived yet.

I'd like to respond to the minister's statement on Education Week. The minister invited people to visit our local schools and to see the good work that's going on there, and I would generally agree that that's the case, but I do have to stand in this place and talk to the minister about some of the schools in my riding, some of the schools that I've asked questions about here in this Legislature.

Some of the schools are overcrowded; some of them have mouldy, raccoon-infested portables; in some of them, the children are being bused from one location a few blocks or even up to a kilometre away to other schools because they cannot be housed in their neighbourhoods, all because this government has refused to spend the money, even though the schools are on the list and have raised to the top. They are the ones the most in need in Toronto.

The view has come down from this minister and this government that the money cannot be spent and will not be spent. So the children in my community wonder about these schools that need to be visited, because what they see is overcrowded schools, mouldy, raccoon-infested



portables and children forced onto buses where it has never had to happen before.

These schools include some of the neediest schools in Toronto:

—Crescent Town school, which is largely made up of new immigrant kids, used to be up to grade 6; it's now down to grade 4 because after you get to grade 4 you have to be bused to another community;

—McGregor school, which is overflowing; the portables are there, and they're all mouldy;

—Victoria Park school, which was supposed to have been shut down and which is still experiencing some tremendous problems;

—Secord school, which is largely made up of new immigrant kids, with so many portables you cannot even believe how many are there; and

—Selwyn school, attached to G.A. Brown, which is also experiencing these great many problems.

I support the teachers, I support the work that's being done in education, but I'm asking this minister to please support the families and children in Beaches–East York. All they're asking for is that the money that is appropriated for their schools be spent. Give those kids a real opportunity that the rest of the province currently enjoys.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements. I've been out of sync a little bit. I've got to get into a routine again, so it's time for petitions from the member from Durham.

## PETITIONS

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I wait for these occasions to at least give voice for my constituents in the riding of Durham. This one reads as follows:

"Whereas collecting and restoring older vehicles honours Ontario's automotive heritage while contributing to the economy through the purchase of goods and services, tourism, and support for special events; and

"Whereas the stringent application of emissions regulations for older cars equipped with newer engines can result in fines and additional expenses that discourage car collectors and restorers from pursuing their hobby; and

"Whereas newer engines installed by hobbyists in vehicles over 20 years old provide cleaner emissions than the original equipment; and

"Whereas car collectors typically use their vehicles only on an occasional basis, during four to five months of the year;

"Therefore, be it resolved that the Ontario Legislature support Ontarians who collect and restore old vehicles by amending the appropriate laws and regulations to ensure vehicles over 20 years old and exempt from Drive Clean testing shall also be exempt from additional emissions requirements enforced by the Ministry of the Environ-

ment and governing the installation of newer engines into old cars and trucks."

I'm pleased to sign it and support it on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham and present it to Madison, one of the pages.

## HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas St. Joseph's Health Care centre has decided to close its less than 15 year old community hydrotherapy pool on June 28/13. Hundreds of people in pain will be denied this imperative therapy which has been specifically ordered by their physicians and physiotherapists. There is no other affordable pool in the area with three depth levels, salt water at least 92 degrees F with excellent accessibility and hydrotherapy leadership. This decision is in opposition to the statements of the health minister to increase health dollars in the community for physiotherapy and for seniors. Pool patrons' requests to work with St. Joseph's to continue this program have been ignored. The sacrificial work of fundraising to build the pool is being ignored.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We ask you to direct St. Joseph's Health Care centre to continue its hydrotherapy program in this excellent, appropriate pool. This decision will save huge amounts of health dollars both now and in the future."

I sign this petition and I give it to page Brendan.

## ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough's oldest and most well-established community; and

"Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

"Whereas historically Agincourt's electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

"Whereas communities such as Scarborough–Agincourt with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

"Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

"Whereas 'community of interest' is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

"Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

"Whereas the commission's report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

"Whereas the residents of Scarborough-Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain in its entirety;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough-Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough-Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401."

I fully support the petition, Mr. Speaker, and give the petition to Tenzin.

### CHILDREN'S PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATION

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there has been a dramatic increase in the use of psychiatric medication on children, especially children in care or provincial custody; and

"Whereas it is an established scientific fact that psychiatric drugs cause shrinkage and related problems to the development of the still-developing brain; and

"Whereas it is our responsibility as a society to protect and care for our children;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To create a policy statement discouraging the use of psychiatric drugs on children and send it to all Ontario clinics and mental health care facilities working with children;

"To actively monitor the rate of use of psychiatric drugs on children to ensure that it is going down;

"To amend the professional misconduct regulation under the Medicine Act so that prescribing medication to children where the use of such medication has not been specifically approved by Health Canada for their age group and purpose constitutes professional misconduct; also to alter OHIP practices such that such use is not covered."

I affix my signature in full support, Mr. Speaker.

1340

### CYCLING

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas 28% of Ontario's adults regularly cycle and over 50% of children cycle either daily or weekly;

"Whereas a cycling fatality occurs every month in Ontario and thousands of cyclists are injured each month;

"Whereas Ontario is lagging behind provinces like British Columbia and Quebec that have invested \$31 million and \$200 million respectively in cycling infrastructure;

"Whereas investing in cycling infrastructure in Ontario will create jobs and benefit the economy, reduce

traffic congestion and pollution, protect those sharing the road, encourage active transportation, and improve public health;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario release a comprehensive bicycling strategy for Ontario that facilitates the development of policy and legislation relating to bicycling in Ontario. This policy would include dedicated funding to match municipal investments in cycling infrastructure, education initiatives to raise awareness about the rights and responsibilities of all road users, and a review and update of provincial legislation, including the Highway Traffic Act and Planning Act, to ensure roadways are safe for all users;

"That the strategy set provincial targets and timelines for increasing the number of people who commute by bike and cycle recreationally."

I agree with this. I'll sign my name to it and give it to page Brigid.

### ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've got a petition today to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough's oldest and most well-established community; and

"Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough-Agincourt share unique interests; and

"Whereas historically Agincourt's electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

"Whereas communities such as Scarborough-Agincourt with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

"Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough-Agincourt; and

"Whereas 'community of interest' is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

"Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough-Agincourt riding; and

"Whereas the commission's report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough-Agincourt community; and

"Whereas the residents of Scarborough-Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety, with its north Scarborough neighbours;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough-Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include



a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401.”

I agree with this, will sign it and send it down with Jack.

#### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the McGuinty-Wynne government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and send it down—

*Interjections.*

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I have a petition which reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Health is planning to delist OHIP physiotherapy clinics as of August 1st, 2013, which represents cuts in physiotherapy services to seniors, children and people with disabilities who currently receive care at designated OHIP physiotherapy clinics; and

“Whereas people who are currently eligible for OHIP physiotherapy treatments can receive 100 treatments per year plus an additional 50 treatments annually if medically necessary. The proposed change will reduce the number of allowable treatments to 12 per year; while enhancing geographical access is positive, the actual physiotherapy that any individual receives will be greatly reduced; and

“Whereas the current OHIP physiotherapy providers have been providing seniors, children and people with disabilities with individualized treatments for over 48 years, and these services have been proven to help improve function, mobility, activities of daily living, pain, and falls risk;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To review and reverse the decision to drastically cut OHIP physiotherapy services to our most vulnerable

population—seniors, children and people with disabilities; and to maintain the policy that seniors, children and people with disabilities continue to receive up to 100 treatments per year at eligible clinics, with a mechanism to access an additional 50 treatments when medically necessary.”

I’m in agreement. I will sign my signature and send it with page Tenzin.

#### MARKDALE HOSPITAL

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Grey Bruce Health Services’ Markdale hospital is the only health care facility between Owen Sound and Orangeville on the Highway 10 corridor;

“Whereas the community of Markdale rallied to raise \$13 million on the promise they would get a new state-of-the-art hospital in Markdale;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announce as soon as possible its intended construction date for the new Markdale hospital and ensure that the care needs of the patients and families of our community are met in a timely manner.”

I support this and will send it with page Benjamin to the Clerks’ table.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas social assistance benefits in Ontario leave recipients far below the poverty line, struggling to meet the basic costs of living, and without any resources to handle emergencies;

“Whereas the provincial government has announced deep cuts to the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit;

“Whereas this program provides emergency support to help families pay for basic utilities;

“Whereas this program provides options for vulnerable people including women, children and people with disabilities to escape domestic violence and transition to safer housing;

“Whereas the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit is a critical emergency program that helps to prevent homelessness;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the province of Ontario restore full funding for the Community Start-up and Maintenance Benefit and ensure that it continues to go directly to those who need it.”

I agree with this. I’ll sign my name to it and give it to page Ethan.

## WORKPLACE INSURANCE

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas beginning 1 January 2013 WSIB was expanded to include groups of employers and principals who had previously been exempt from WSIB and had private insurance; and

“Whereas this new financial burden does nothing to improve worker safety and only drives up the cost of doing business in Ontario; and

“Whereas the chair of the WSIB—in committee meetings last year—admitted this will not help cover the accumulated WSIB debt, but make the problem worse by adding further liabilities;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To repeal the statutory obligations created by Bill 119.”

I agree with this and I will be signing it.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have received many more “Stop the Trades Tax” petitions that I’d like to read in the Legislature. It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with new membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Liberal government stop their job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

I support this petition.

## WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents and municipalities across Ontario want the ability to veto and/or plan for industrial wind turbines in their community; and

“Whereas ratepayers in Ontario want all forms of energy generation to be affordable and reliable; and

“Whereas residents of Ontario want the feed-in tariff program to be eliminated; and

“Whereas residents of Ontario want to protect environmentally sensitive areas like the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges moraine from the development of wind turbines;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson’s private member’s bill, the Ensuring Affordable Energy Act, and call committee hearings immediately on the bill.”

I support this petition.

## ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s newly created Ontario College of Trades is taxing hard-working tradespeople with membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year; and

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

“Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs, and drive people out of trades;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this. This represents hundreds of petitions from my riding. I will send it down with Megan.

1350

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I regret that I have to say that the time for petitions has expired.

A number of members wished to present petitions today. I wish I could have accommodated them. I would remind the members whom I did recognize that you don’t have to read the whole petition from start to finish. If you could abbreviate them somewhat, it would ensure that everybody would get their chance to present their petition.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## 2013 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 2, 2013, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? I’m pleased to recognize the leader of Her Majesty’s official opposition.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker I’m very pleased to respond to the budget motion tabled by the Minister of Finance and his budget speech on Thursday, May 2. I want to say as well at the outset that I will be splitting my available time with my colleague the party’s finance critic and the member for Thornhill, Peter Shurman.

The Ontario I want to see, I imagine, is pretty much what the vast majority of Ontarians want to see. They want to see an Ontario where they wake up in the morning with a good job to go to. In so doing, with that security, that confidence in the province, you can go out and buy a home and you can raise a family. And they



want the kind of Ontario where hard work and talent are rewarded with more take-home pay.

Speaker, we owe it to Ontarians to begin today's debate with their hopes and, yes, their worries, that are uppermost in our thoughts. So let me speak first to the hopes—hopes that I think that we all share—not only getting a good job, but Ontarians have hope for a province where children are attending quality schools, getting the best possible quality of education to take on a very competitive world, a lot different from the time, Speaker, when you and I grew up; where you can be confident that your aging parents or a young child has excellent health care close by, without delay, without difficulty; where businesses and entrepreneurs can pursue their dreams, bring new products to market and create good jobs again; with first-class roads, bridges and transportation networks. That's the Ontario of our aspirations, Mr. Speaker, a province that has more to offer than anywhere else in the entire world.

I'm going to let you in on an open secret, Speaker: It's not the Ontario that we see today in 2013. Despite all that hope, our confidence in that bright future, what I describe is not the Ontario that we reside in after almost 10 years of Liberal government. Somebody once said that "status quo" was Latin for "the mess that we're in." We all know first-hand too many human stories that reflect the tough times that abound, whether you're in Wellington—Halton Hills, here in Toronto, in Niagara West—Glanbrook or Nipissing or Kenora—Rainy River.

What does that mean? Today, Speaker, as we address the budget motion, there are almost 600,000 men and women—our friends, neighbours, somebody who lives down the street or in the same building; family members—who are out of work. They've got no job to go to this Monday. They may not have a job to go to next Monday. They worry that, come next month, there will be no job for them either. The sad thing is, Mr. Speaker, that many of those folks, those men and women, are losing hope in this great province of Ontario for themselves and for their kids.

There are also many people who have lost good manufacturing jobs. I was saddened to hear, even since the budget came out, two more sets of job losses: Caterpillar closing down another plant; I know that Waterloo manufacturing, a long-time furniture construction business in Kitchener, is sending 200-and-some jobs over to Michigan. A lot of people had counted on the manufacturing sector for their livelihood to provide for their kids. We've lost 300,000 of those jobs.

No doubt, Speaker, many of those men and women are working part-time jobs. They're proud they can put a cheque on the table to help pay for the groceries and hopefully put their kids through college or university, but they know in their hearts that we can do a lot better than this. Speaker, that's their status quo.

Over the last 18 months, I've talked to women and men, university and college graduates among them, from every corner of the province of Ontario. I've been on radio talk shows; at Tim Hortons shops—also, more than

50 town halls that I've done in every corner of the province; over 100 visits to businesses, from the smallest mom-and-pop operations to the largest operators in Ontario. Everywhere I go, people are worried. They ask me questions like, "Why are there so many people without jobs?" "When are the jobs coming back to Ontario?" "Why is our economic growth so weak, when I see other provinces racing ahead of Ontario and we're at the back of the pack?" "Why is our debt growing so fast, and what does that actually mean for the things that I care about, that I hold precious, like hospitals or our classrooms?" Then they ask me, Speaker, "Why in God's name is the great province of Ontario a have-not province?"

I've talked about the Ontario of our hopes, but in many ways, when I talk to people, they're seeing an Ontario of their fears. So, before we get to the budget, we need to talk about: How did it get this way? How did we dig a hole this deep?

Well, it starts with the very simple fact that the serious jobs-and-spending crisis we face today didn't just happen overnight. That came about as a series of deliberate policy choices that this government has made over the last decade—a direct result of individual policy choices that the government made. Along the way, through all of those individual decisions, nobody actually stopped and asked themselves a very basic question: "How do we pay for them? How are we going to finance all of these promises?"

My colleague from Thornhill, the finance critic, will talk about the 20 new promises in this budget with no way to pay for them.

I think it's a very fair question. Why did nobody ever stop at a moment in time and ask, "Where is the money going to come from?" Average businesses, families—every household in Ontario has to live within its means, so why can't government learn to live within its means just like families do across the province each and every day?

I'll make a very simple statement here, Speaker—one that seems to, bizarrely, elicit a lot of debate and controversy here in the assembly. I brought it up in question period today. It's pretty basic. It comes from my heart and my mind, and I know people across the province say the exact same thing. We've got a big problem here, and we all know that Ontario can do a lot better than this. Ontario's economic growth has stayed stagnant or anemic at best, set against government spending that's up by nearly \$4 billion this year alone. It's driven by spending increases in two out of three ministries. Despite the fact that we're in a deficit situation, Speaker, and we're on track to now not only doubling but tripling our debt, this government made a deliberate decision in the most recent budget to actually increase spending in two out of three ministries. All this means is that Ontario's deficit is actually larger than all of the other nine provinces' combined. We have the biggest debt in Canada, and our debt on a per capita basis is actually bigger than California's, the most indebted state in the US.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Three times.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** In fact, my colleague says it's three times larger than the per capita debt of the state of California.

Speaker, I don't make up these statistics. I actually have a very authoritative source for these conclusions: It's the 2013 Ontario budget. As Ronald Reagan once said, "Facts are stubborn things." It's your budget. You see, the facts in the budget tell us that the deficit is actually going up, not down; that all other provinces and even the state of California are going to balance their budgets faster than we can here in the province of Ontario. The budget tells us that our accumulated debt is actually going up, not down. This year, we'll actually pay \$11 billion in debt-servicing costs alone—\$11 billion drained away from our classrooms, our hospitals, investing in subways in the GTA, highways—each year, gone.

1400

It's like, Speaker, when you get your credit card bill at home—I know you're the kind who would pay it off every month, but not everybody can do that—and you actually see that line on your credit card bill that says, "How much is the minimum payment?" You've got to get through at least that. You've got to get ahead of that if you actually want to pay it down, but your minimum payment—do you know what the minimum payment in the province of Ontario is now, on our credit card bill? It's \$11 billion, the third-highest expenditure in all the government.

It just seems to be basic that when you're heading over a cliff, you don't simply slow down the car. You have to actually hit the brake, turn around and go in the opposite direction. Instead, this budget chose to press on the accelerator by adding more debt and a larger deficit. Sadly, with last Thursday's budget, this government chose to continue down a path that's only going to send our province over the edge unless you cry "stop" and go in the other direction.

Let me put this into perspective: The most joyful event in anyone's life is welcoming a son or daughter into the world—great excitement; it's the anticipation; it's the human connection instantly, with a little child there in your arms. With that comes great expectations about what the future will hold for your son or daughter, because as Canadians and Ontarians, we want every generation to do better than the one that came before it.

Like the Hudak family immigrants from what was then Czechoslovakia, there are many stories like that within the PC caucus and members of all parties here in the assembly: the dream that that next generation will be more prosperous—better jobs, more comfort, better health care, better education. That's in jeopardy when you continue to spend beyond your means. That's in jeopardy when the minimum payment on the government credit card is the third-highest expenditure in government, ahead of highways, roads, subways and buses combined.

Back to that little girl, born tomorrow: A little girl who's born tomorrow, a family full of excitement and joy, as they should be, that little girl will have \$20,000 of provincial debt on her back—the moment she enters this

beautiful world, \$20,000 of provincial debt on her back; the moment she enters diapers, \$20,000 of provincial debt on her back.

The problem is, when the Liberals came into office, it was about \$11,000, so they've basically doubled the provincial debt in their time in office. They made that decision, which I think runs against Canadian values, to actually impose a \$20,000 debt on every little girl and little boy born in the province of Ontario.

I'll make another very simple statement, one that again elicits debate from across the floor, but I believe that Ontarians are with us on that: It is morally wrong to put \$20,000 of debt on the back of every child in our province. We owe it to that child, that next generation, and her parents to do a lot better than that.

We owe it to the next generation not to put more debt on their backs so they can actually grow up into the best job market in the world, with the kind of opportunities we had counted on in the past that you can't count on today—not a jobs market hobbled badly by debt, a debt so huge that simply making the minimum payment gives other countries a head start to take that child's future job prospects away, to take their future away from them.

So think about this in two ways, Speaker: I think it's morally wrong to put a \$20,000 debt on the back of a newborn girl or boy in this province. But think about this, too: People don't lend us that money for free. We've got to pay it back, and then we pay it back with interest. That means that all that money, all those billions, will go in the pockets of our overseas lenders.

Does anyone know here that the debt of our province is actually traded in 11 different currencies worldwide? Does anyone here believe that that money—our overseas lenders take it and they put it in the mattress? What do they do with it, Speaker? They invest it in their own subways, their own highways, their own universities and colleges and their own health care systems. They build stronger countries that actually take away the jobs in the future, so that little girl who's going to grow up with \$20,000 of debt on her back is going to enter an even more challenging job market because we gave it all away to our competitors.

Speaker, enough is enough. I want to build a future for that girl. I want to build a future for that boy or girl in the province of Ontario.

So we face a choice: spend within our means today, or deeper debt. We face a choice: creating jobs in the province of Ontario for this generation and the next, or see those jobs go overseas, so that baby girl born today with \$20,000 in provincial debt on her head, when she seeks to enter the job market, is going to be squeezed by international competition—tougher competition that this government helped to finance, because they couldn't make the necessary decisions today to live within their means. That's the other story buried inside this government's budget that they don't want you to know.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** It's an inconvenient truth.



**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I don't want to quote Al Gore in any of my speeches, so I'll leave that one. I'll do Reagan, not Gore.

So what do we do about it, Speaker? I've laid out the problems as I see it. These are the problems I hear when I talk to Ontarians across this great province. I think there's no question that you've got to do something. People understand in their gut that this problem around jobs and debt needs to be fixed, and it needs to be fixed fast, because it's not going to fix itself.

So we need two things. We need a bold, comprehensive plan to bring jobs back to the province of Ontario, to make sure government lives within its means each and every day—and that we have a team with the courage of its convictions to actually get that job done.

It starts with less spending. It starts with a government that lives within its means. Yet we keep increasing the size of the budget. How do we do that? Well, we borrow, and we borrow some more, and then we borrow some more beyond that. How have we borrowed? During the time of this Liberal government, Ontario has actually doubled its debt. Let's put that into perspective. That's about \$270 billion. Ontario's debt is greater than all the other provinces' debt combined.

But are we satisfied that despite all that spending, despite digging that debt hole so deep—are we convinced that we're better off? Are we convinced that we have great schools that are doing the best to raise the standards for our kids? Or do we instead see an education system paralyzed by a constant battle between the teacher union activists and the government of the day?

Do we think our health care system is actually prepared for the very predictable challenges of the 21st century, or does it seem like we're slipping further and further behind?

Do we think we have a transportation system, especially in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, that is world-class, that gets people to move efficiently and effectively? Or do we believe what we actually see and experience each and every day, stuck in our car when we'd rather be home with the family for dinner, seeing our daughter play soccer?

You see, the problem with spending beyond our means is it cuts off the capacity to pay for things that we actually care about. Now, ironically, here in this debate, Speaker, those who oppose the path I've laid out will talk about the need for compassion. But their approach will rob us of the ability to be compassionate in the first place. If we don't start to resist the temptation to overspend and to pay for it with even more borrowed money, we will very soon get to a point where we cannot even have the basic programs in our province. There will truly be no money left to support them, since nobody will lend to us and we only have a very weakened private sector economy to pay for it.

That's why we call over and over again for a government that actually lives within its means, that respects every taxpayer dollar sent here to Queen's Park, that sets priorities and makes decisions. What does that mean? It

means we actually have to reduce spending, not increase it, and you've got to be smart about it. So let me tell you how.

This is no time to inflate the size of cabinet by 25% to reward your political followers. It's time to create a smaller, more focused government and actually be a leader.

A two-year public sector wage freeze across the board for all of us, whether it's teachers, firefighters, us as MPPs—that will save \$2 billion a year for a minimum of two years. That will buy us time for deeper, lasting structural reforms to the way that government operates and spends.

Moving new government employees from expensive, gold-standard pension plans to more affordable retirement savings programs, like those common in the private sector, is the right thing to do, and it's time we brought that to the province as well.

**1410**

Then we need to eliminate programs we simply cannot afford any longer. Look, it's not whether it's a good program or a bad program; it's what we can afford. So we will look at every government program and put it to a very simple test. If it's a priority and it's necessary and it's working, then you keep it; if it's broken, then you fix it. But if it can no longer justify its value to the taxpayers who pay the bills, you have to shut it down. Use that to balance the books and invest in priorities.

We must create a government worker salary arbitration system that recognizes and respects the ability of taxpayers to pay the bill. I referenced earlier, Speaker, how this government, instead of hitting the brakes, has chosen not simply to head over the fiscal cliff—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** They're laying on the gas pedal.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —they're laying on the gas pedal. I was shocked, when I read through the budget papers: not a single mention of arbitration, and the across-the-board mandatory wage freeze has been thrown out the window. If they don't have the basic resolve to make those simple and necessary decisions, they have no capacity whatsoever to balance the books of the province, to rein in spending—another reason why we need a change in government, a change in the team that leads this great province of Ontario.

We must seek out the best deal on every project, based on merit, cost and quality—not political allegiance. We will open up all contracts for competitive bidding, because if someone can do a better job for the taxpayer at a better price, don't they deserve that contract at the end of the day? Of course they do.

I think it's time we injected in the public sector what has worked in the private. These tools of the 1970s and 1980s are no longer relevant for the economy or the rightfully sophisticated demands of taxpayers in the 21st century. It's time we brought performance pay into the public service, Speaker. I know the members of the Liberal Party oppose this, so let me explain why I think it is important.

When you look at what has worked outside of government, you actually set goals, you measure outcomes and then you reward those who helped you achieve those outcomes. We need that in the civil service in the province of Ontario. I know front-line workers in the civil service; they'd react very positively to this message. If you're working hard, if you're making a big effort, every effort you can for the benefit of those who receive those services—maybe our most vulnerable, our students, those in the health care system—you should be rewarded for that effort.

Speaker, there is some teacher out there who is doing an excellent job in the classroom working with our kids, helping to raise the bar in her classroom. She's staying after school for the extra time to help that special needs kid who is struggling to read, to learn the joy of reading a book. If she's coaching the teams, doing the field trips, shouldn't we recognize that impact on the education of our kids and pay for performance, not simply based on their seniority?

If there is a nurse applying her newest training to help people get back on their feet in our health care system quicker than humanly thought possible, shouldn't we reward that excellent performance of our nurses in the system? Isn't it time that we brought performance pay? These things are just too critical to do the old ways. Let's bring performance pay in the government in the province of Ontario.

There are some ideas, Speaker, and there are lots more about how we actually make sure government lives within its means, how we set priorities and how we improve the quality of public services in the province of Ontario.

Let me add to that: Important as all of that is, you can't simply cut your way to prosperity. We will need to reduce spending, but you need to grow the economy, too. So that's the second thing I want to talk about from our PC plan to turn our province around. We've got to get our economic fundamentals right to create the climate for economic growth, for job creation, for investment again in Ontario.

That's why, Speaker, every close call, every tough decision, every argument must get resolved on the base of what it does to grow our economy, to create jobs. Businesses today will choose to locate where costs are lower, where approvals happen faster and they have the confidence to hire.

Here's what we're going to do to put the province of Ontario at the top of that list. We'll start by uprooting a growing thicket of red tape—the runaround, the hassle that stands in the way to innovation and job creation. It's almost like somebody, if they had the audacity to create a job in the province of Ontario—there's this wall of bureaucrats, rules and regulations standing in their way. It's time we respected job creators for the investors they are in our province, the confidence they have in our economy, so get out of their way, get behind them and help them create jobs in our great province again.

We need to modernize our labour laws so businesses can turn on a dime to meet changing global demand, to

take advantage of new market opportunities, to take on a tough new competitor.

It's past time for a very sensible approach when it comes to energy. It's one of the biggest costs of doing business. So let's put aside the view that it's some sort of plaything for the politicians, and let's treat it like an economic fundamental. We need to renew our alliance with, and our reliance on, traditional workhorses of the system. There's no doubt now, Speaker, that demand is lower. We've lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs. But I am confident that our economic job creation plan will bring good jobs back to the province; that industry and manufacturing will be on the rise again. Across the board, from health sciences to tech to engineering, this is going to be the place to be in all of North America. We need to make sure we have the hydro supply at a reliable and affordable price.

That's why a PC government will be sure to build around nuclear, hydroelectricity and natural gas: to build an affordable and reliable energy system so people can pay the bills and we'll bring jobs back to the province of Ontario.

Speaker, we need to reduce the tax burden on our job creators, to encourage them to invest in new equipment and technology, to create new product lines and then hire more people again.

We need to open up the skilled trades to create more good-paying jobs in a field we all know is facing a looming skills shortage. So we'll work with our colleges. We'll take out, out of the 1970s, our outdated rules around journeymen-to-apprenticeship ratios. There may have been some good things about the 1970s, Speaker—the music was pretty good; disco, maybe not so much—but why the Liberals are bringing these outdated 1970s policies around the trades—we have a plan that will create 200,000 good, well-paying jobs in the skilled trades in our province, and in so doing, we need to build an economy that is once again a magnet for the talented immigrants who know our future depends upon them.

Speaker, it is something of great pride that Ontario has always been a beacon to the best and the brightest anywhere in the world to come to our province, to come to our country to make their way—a place where they know they'll be rewarded based on hard work and the quality of what they put in. It troubles me that our share of economic immigrants has declined by 25% under the Liberal government. I understand why. New Canadians are increasingly going to BC or Saskatchewan or Alberta because they know they can build a business; they know they can get a good job; they know that their kids will actually get work in the field in which they study. I decry this decline that sees new Canadians heading west. I want to see them opening businesses here in the province of Ontario. I want to see the talent put to work in our great province. That's why we'll build on the Provincial Nominee Program: to invite more entrepreneurs into our province to create jobs not just for themselves but for others as well.



For the talented international students in our universities and colleges, we should offer an accelerated path to residency and citizenship, to see that talent building their own families and building the province of Ontario.

Speaker, an end to gridlock here in the GTA, to restore our productivity and get our goods to market by day, and to make sure that families get home to be together by night—I will say that our plan isn't going to rip up the existing streets, like that mess on St. Clair. Our plan is not going to throw good money after bad in a system where everybody's in charge and therefore no one is. The province will seize the wheel. We'll set the priorities. We will get the job done. I believe that world-class cities build underground, they build subways, and that's exactly what we'll do here in Toronto, in the GTA.

Speaker, that is how we can get out of this mess. Is it too much to ask? Well, not for the Ontario that I grew up in, not for the Ontario that I'm proud to call home, and not for the Ontario that I know today. All it takes is a new team, with a new plan for less spending and more jobs, built on the courage of our convictions and the strength of the proud history of the province of Ontario. Our plan will make Ontario lead this great country and lead this continent again.

Here we stand, at a moment of truth for our province. It is a time of great challenge and also a time of promise. We have a choice. We can go on wringing our hands and ask, "Why?" Or we can all lift ourselves up and ask, "Why not?" So why not, Mr. Speaker?

1420

But while it's a fine thing for Ontarians to draw inspiration from our past, we now need to look to our future. The future always offers hope, because we always have a choice, and it's a choice that's not about left or right but a choice of new solutions or more problems, a choice of progress or further decline. I will not ask the people of this province to vote against the other leaders, to vote against their plans, but to vote for our plan for a better Ontario.

Speaker, here's the choice before us in the weeks ahead: Look, if you think Ontario is on the right track, if you think this is the best we can do, the good news is, you have two parties to choose from: the Liberals or the NDP.

But if you believe that Ontario can do a lot better than this, if you believe Ontario can fulfill its destiny as the lead province in Canada, the lead place in North America, then I ask you to look at our plan. It will get the economy going and make sure government lives within its means.

That's why, when it comes to this budget vote, we say with the full strength of our convictions that we must change course now. There's no time to lose. Every day's delay in turning away from reckless overspending is another day that's lost to more debt, more job losses and further decline. And the longer it takes, the deeper the hole, the worse our challenges become, the harder the lifting and the heavier the lifting will be, to actually get us back on our feet.

As the days slip away, more children will be born to anxious Ontario parents, each one with a \$20,000 debt inheritance: debt they didn't ask for, debt they're not responsible for, debt that they can't even comprehend, and certainly debt they can't afford. But that's the future they face if we don't change course today.

So this isn't about Kathleen Wynne; it's not about Andrea Horwath; it's not about Tim Hudak. It's about the future of this great province of Ontario, our vision of a strong, confident, prosperous province. The solutions to our problems: They're easy to see; they're just hard to do. But let's begin at it today.

I see an Ontario of great destiny, a province that is going to rise again. If we make these decisions now, we can bring good jobs back to our province. We can restore investment in Ontario. We can give hope to business owners and start-ups, small and big alike.

I commit here in this place and today to the people of this proud province that I will not run from the tough struggles. I will say to the people of this proud province that I will protect the things that we care about, and I propose to do exactly what needs to be done.

So until that time, I say to the business owner who's struggling to hang on: I want you to hang on a little longer. To those who have packed up and moved away from Ontario: I want you to come back home. To the moms and dads who are struggling to make ends meet, to provide for their family: Hope is on the way. And to the business owners and investors who are looking to other provinces, states or countries: I want you to take a good, hard look at the great province of Ontario that we will build, because our comeback is about to begin.

So, friends, let's stop waiting for better, and let's make better happen.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm pleased to recognize the member for Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'm pleased to continue on behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party. I've got to say right off the top that in beginning to prepare for this debate, thinking about the budget motion, an expression came into my mind that has been there for many, many, many years. I can't think of one that applies more directly to this situation, and I say it to all of my Liberal friends sitting on the other side: You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** And you can't.

It was Thursday. It was the day that opposition and media go early in the morning into the lock-up. For those watching us at home, the lock-up is where we get a preview of the budget before the finance minister actually delivers his speech here in the House.

I took a look at this document. In fact, I have it here with me. It's not a prop; that's what the budget looks like. I thought to myself, "Is my watch wrong? Because it seems to me like it must be April Fool's Day." But it was no joke. It was not a joke.

Here's what isn't the joke: The Liberals didn't even write their own budget. The budget is essentially a pre-

nuptial agreement between the NDP and the Liberals to serve their own political gain—both of those parties' political gain. But at least in the case of the NDP, the NDP actually believes that it's helping Ontarians; I'll give them that. It's not about you out there; it's about the Liberals saving their own backsides.

The NDP has a laundry list of demands that has basically been accepted in total by the Liberal government. It costs an additional \$1 billion annually, and, as amply illustrated by my leader moments ago, that's another \$1 billion we just don't have. And it's not about whether we have it or not; it's about keeping people in power who have no business and no legitimate claim to power in the province of Ontario today.

Springtime is supposed to be a time of growth and renewal. With this budget, the only thing that this government has renewed and the only thing that it has grown is its commitment to the old Dalton McGuinty playbook of taxing you more and then spending all of that and then some. The Wynne-Horwath alliance will increase the financial burden on our province, and it will exacerbate our jobs crisis, further endangering our province's vital signs and, more importantly, endangering your personal financial viability sitting at that kitchen table or that home office desk every night trying to figure out (a) whether you can pay the bills and (b) whether you're going to have a job to be able to pay them.

These people have failed to produce a realistic and credible debt reduction plan to restore confidence in our economy and to create jobs, two things that have been continuously missing from budgets presented by that party over a period of years. This budget is brought to you by people who are long on rhetoric and low on math skills. We need to balance the budget, but the Liberals cannot fathom what the word "balance" even means. How do you control spending without so much as a single piece of legislation aimed at doing that?

There's a favourite page that I have in this book, and this is a book that—we'll hear, over the course of the coming weeks, Liberals standing up in question period or in debate, and they'll say that we didn't read it, but my favourite page is page 109. There's a chart on page 109.

I have to tell a story. A couple of weeks ago, our party went to the public—went through the media to the public, and people will recall this—and we said, "You know, they talk about balancing the budget, bringing the deficit to zero by 2017-18. That's what they say they're going to do, but the problem is, they don't provide any detail. There's nothing in there on costs; they just have little hash marks across the cost line, and they have a zero at the bottom line in 2017-18. How are they going to do it?" We challenged them.

I have to say, they gave us an answer. They put real numbers in there. What they say is, in the interim figures as to the way we finished the year that ended March 31, that they spent about \$114 billion. According to plan, in the budget just presented, that will rise to \$117 billion in the year that we've already started. So in terms of controlling anything, they're already \$3.6 billion ahead.

Then—oh, by next year, it will only reduce by about \$1 billion to \$118 billion, and look at that: in the year after that, they'll hold it at \$118 billion. Then we take the extended outlook to 2016-17, where, guess what? The expenditures will again be \$118 billion. We go to the final year, the year in which they're going to bring to a balance the bottom line, and the expenditures that year, surprisingly, will again be \$118 billion.

This is a government that has been around through 10 budgets, that has managed to double spending in the province of Ontario over that period of time, that has doubled the debt to something pushing close to \$300 billion, and these are the people that we are going to trust to hold the line for four years? Who are you kidding?

Ontarians already pay more and work longer for this McGuinty-Wynne government. You Liberal MPPs over there: You'll stand in your places and you'll debate. You'll say that we were voting against it before we read it. Well, now we've read it, so I ask a question: Have you? Because I doubt it. Those folks were ready to vote for this budget, no matter what it said, when it came out, because that's what they were told to do. If you had read it, how could you even begin to believe that your party has Ontario's back? Because it doesn't.

#### 1430

Here's some interesting factoid material. From January 1 to June 10, every single dollar that you make goes to the government. Tax freedom day for Ontarians is now seven days later than it was in 2009. We've gained a week in about three and a half years. You now work seven days more for this government than you did in 2009. That's remarkable. Anyway, you're still working for them right now. As you can tell, it's another four weeks before we achieve that point and have tax freedom.

Through the McGuinty-Wynne government's unbridled spending, Ontario has the highest debt in our history—146 years of history for Ontario—staring down the barrel of a financial gun right now, as we are at \$273 billion and looking, within the next couple of years, at \$300 billion in accumulated debt. How do you ever pay that back? You don't; your kids do and your grandkids do, if they can, if we can bail this province out in the intervening time. That's why we need a change.

This is a pivotal moment for Ontario, Speaker. Our province's finances are in shambles. We have been called into question by Moody's and by S&P, have lost 300,000 well-paid manufacturing jobs, and have seen many companies pack up and just leave—two more just recently—and we don't see a lot of new ones arriving to replace those. Our province has at any given moment, right now, between 500,000 and 600,000 people looking for work. Yes, Premier Wynne, it's 7.7% unemployment. I thought you might want to know that, because you didn't last week.

This is not the prosperous Ontario where I raised my kids.

We are overachieving in debt. Equalization payments are tilting inward as other provinces take care of Ontario. If debt interest were a ministry, it would be the third-



highest-spending government department: number one, health, as arguably it should be; number two, education; and number three, the ministry of interest, just to service our debt.

With continued spending in this budget, without any cutbacks, the Liberals are trying to fight fire with wind. What do you do then? You spread the flames.

The McGuinty-Wynne government celebrates our debt and our deficit. The fact that we are not \$15 billion in the hole for last year, but “only” \$9.8 billion—they applauded that when Finance Minister Sousa read his budget speech last week. They applauded it. Who knew that sheep could clap? Only the Ontario Liberals would celebrate a \$9.8-billion deficit. Not only that, Speaker; it was a fudged number. By way of proof, the deficit in the new budget actually increases next year to \$11.7 billion. These are the people who say that they’re going to arrive at balance in 2017-18. They must have been born with silver spoons in their mouths to think that these numbers that I’m quoting are small amounts of money. What a sense of entitlement.

It is imperative to get our province’s fiscal house in order, and this government doesn’t even begin to be remorseful. The first step towards recovery is admitting that you have a problem. The McGuinty-Wynne Liberals are unable to admit that they have gravely failed this province. They have been negligent caregivers to the province of Ontario. Based on facts and figures, we know that they cannot balance this budget. There are some good ideas thrown in—there always are—but they are so drowned out by the fact that the Liberals cannot manage the books, never have and, as far as I can see, never will. But they do know how to tax, and they do know how to spend your money.

Premier Wynne’s first move was to instantly increase public sector spending through the growth in the size of the Liberal government’s cabinet—and I might say, to the point of ministries, two out of three of those ministries are sustaining increasing expenditures in the year that we’re in now, this budget year. Premier Wynne gave her friends job-title bumps and pay raises. And I think this is really worth noting, for our friends watching at home: There are no Liberal MPPs who do not have some kind of a pay bump-up through an appointed designation—not one. Pay freeze for MPPs? Well, not Liberal MPPs.

During the McGuinty-Wynne tenure, the Premier “increased program spending by an average of 6.1% annually—nearly twice the combined rate of inflation and population growth,” which was at 3.1%. Those figures are courtesy of the Fraser Institute. The Liberal government’s deficit is your money. It’s your money. They owe you money. But guess what? You get to pay it.

Even with our current record low interest rates, interest payments on Ontario’s debt will reach just about \$11 billion this year. They will consume 9.2% of government revenues, again citing statistics that come from the Fraser Institute.

Again, quoting from—or at least paraphrasing—my leader, when you take 9.2% of the revenue away just to service debt, what kinds of services are you giving up? What kinds of needs that need to be fulfilled are you missing out on? That’s money that is not going to expand health care. It’s not going towards infrastructure. It’s not going towards any kind of investment. It’s not creating jobs. You want that transit? They’ll use revenue tools. I love that phrase: revenue tools. Shall I translate? Taxes. That’s what it is. It’s taxes. This government does not have the skill or the backbone to fix our serious problems.

The Minister of Finance himself is one of the most expensive guys around. He cost \$275 million. He’s the \$275-million man. How do I draw that conclusion? His seat was one of the ones saved when they paid for the non-existent Mississauga power plant. He was the recipient of that saved seat. You had to pay even to get a date from him—no, not that kind of a date—the late budget date, which was announced where? At the Economic Club. The business elite knew when your late budget date was coming; the rest of the hard-working people of Ontario: You had to wait to hear.

By the way, poor Minister Sousa. I was there. He didn’t get any applause over there when he announced his deficit figure. He only got it here, from all of you Liberals over there.

Budgets are typically tabled in March. We are now debating this budget in May. Ontarians have been left waiting; now they will be left holding the bag.

The Liberals hired renowned economist Don Drummond to take a fine-toothed comb to each and every ministry and expense in this province. His ultimate conclusion was the same as ours: Cut spending and adhere to a strict debt-reduction plan.

His instruction, however—and this is important—was clarion clear: Do this fast and do it all. Instead, they are going to “try” to implement 60% of his recommendations. At least, we’re supposed to believe that.

This a failing grade for a government that prides itself on education. They don’t grasp the material. They don’t understand our province’s current financial state. That’s also ignoring expert advice from their own man, like your doctor telling you that you should lose weight, you should eat better, you should quit smoking, you should start exercising, you should swear off Twinkies—keep doing everything else and claim success. You just stop the Twinkies and you’re successful—I don’t think so. No restraint or self-control for this government—none. Ontario’s economy needs to immediately be jolted back to life. It needs a defibrillator. It needs resuscitation. Somebody is out there ready to do it. We’re out here ready to do it.

This government needs to get back to the drawing board or it needs to just get out of the way. The Minister of Finance and I both have past careers in the private sector; some people know that. Prior to our public life here at Queen’s Park, we share that. We both know that when you don’t produce the best possible results, what

happens? You're fired, or you're just plain out of business. That is the ultimate in accountability. It is the price for failure.

We have a government that has kicked Ontarians in the teeth. It has left them feeling winded, and now it's coming back to take another blow. Ontarians must demand action from this government to control costs, and Ontarians need proof that it's being done. This budget fails to live up to any of the expectations.

Tim Hudak and the Ontario PCs have been the only party willing to consider views and take direct input from Ontarians, the only party that has shown strong, stable and principled leadership. Our Paths to Prosperity white papers have been released on issues that mattered to people, like creating jobs and fixing our economy, health care, home care, education, and reducing red tape for business and cutting government bureaucracy.

1440

We have a comprehensive and a concrete plan to create jobs, to control spending and to get our economy back on track—we have it. As a matter of fact, I might point out that all of the conclusions of all of those white papers are contained in a minority section of the report that was given not only to this House but to the finance minister, done by the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, so that he could see what our plan is. It's public, it's there, but most importantly, we have it.

Ontario has lived nine and a half years with the same McGuinty-Wynne tax-and-spend agenda. The latest, greatest example of how they use your money? Imagine how far that billion-plus dollars burned by the McGuinty-Wynne election team would have gone right now, or the \$300 million and counting that they handed teachers to cover their missteps of last fall.

For the media, I have your headline for tomorrow: "Ontario Liberals: More for Themselves than for You." It's all at your expense, people of Ontario.

You know, Einstein's definition of insanity pops into my mind, and I think most people know it, but it bears repeating: Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. But that's what they're doing. The McGuinty-Wynne legacy is debt, lost jobs, excessive spending and bloating the public sector, all at the expense of the people of Ontario.

Now, thanks to this government, the public sector is now the new elite, funded by Ontarians, protected by union bosses, and all brought to you by the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals. You pay; they retire with a big pension. Are you okay with that? Because I'm not. Public sector compensation now exceeds that of the private sector by 14%—Fraser Institute figure; also, figures done by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. If you add in pensions and health benefits that they get, that you don't—about a 27% differentiation. Don't believe me. Take a look at the article two weeks ago in Maclean's magazine that talks about the new elite, which is people who work in the broader public sector who are the beneficiaries of this kind of perk that nobody else can get.

You know, it sounds like I'm very anti-union. I want to point out that it's not unions that I'm against. I myself was a member of a union for about 40 years, so it's not as if I'm against unions. But unions have to understand in the broader public sector, in the public service, that their members are no different than any other Ontarians and that, in the parlance of the day, we all have to take one for the team—and you know what? The rest of us have.

It's almost as if the government—and I'm quoting from the former finance minister—went after the low-hanging fruit. That's what he said about the budget last year. Well, now we're down to the pits, so what are we going to do? The pendulum has now swung in a completely opposite direction. Only the Ontario PCs are willing to stand up for taxpayers and not allow this bad behaviour to continue. We will stand up to schoolyard bullies. That's what we're going to do.

Over half of all Ontario government program spending goes to public sector labour costs. Tim Hudak and the PC caucus have called for a two-year, across-the-board broader public sector legislated wage freeze, to save \$2 billion each year and begin the process of controlling government spending—and it's fair.

I might point out that that was a bill I tabled in this House myself about two months ago, and it actually passed second reading. It passed second reading because they couldn't whip enough of their members in here to vote against it.

Ontarians have been paying for raises for unionized government workers while they themselves are struggling to make ends meet. How fair is that? We cannot cut the deficit without putting a temporary brake on excessive costs. Premier Wynne doesn't realize the financial burden that the Liberal government's political pandering to union bosses has placed on our pocketbooks. It has been nine and a half years of driving up public sector spending and putting the demands of union bosses first—nine and a half years of taxpayers footing the bill for the Liberals' political game.

They claim that it's all under control. It's not. Want an example? The sunshine list came out a couple of months ago. The sunshine list, for those who don't know, is the list of all people employed in one way or another by the government who earn in excess of \$100,000. It increased by 8,823 people—almost 9,000 more people making \$100,000-plus this year than last year. How is it possible for that government to tell us that there's no increase for anybody, that they've maintained a zero across the board, if you add 9,000 people to a list of folks who earn six figures? I don't begin to understand. Does it sound like control to you? I don't think so, Speaker.

There is no question, either, that auto insurance rates need addressing. They're high in the province of Ontario; we agree. In fact, premiums have increased by 65% in the last 10 years—65% in the last 10 years. What strikes you as coincidental about 10 years? Oh, yes, that's the period of time they've been in power—65%.



The Insurance Bureau of Canada called this 15% NDP idea in the budget—reducing auto insurance by 15%—a band-aid solution that “may score political points but for the long term all stakeholders need to continue to push for needed reforms and fight fraud.” That’s what the finance committee looked at last summer; that’s what they confirmed was the problem. That’s what we have to be addressing. But, no, we’ll just lop 15% off the top because that’s what the third party wants. You know the NDP doesn’t have much of a track record when it comes to arithmetic, and they’re the ones who are driving the process. This proposal is coming from the same party that put forward a private member’s bill last spring that would have seen convicted drunk drivers paying less for auto insurance. Fifteen per cent across the board also means that bad drivers get to pay less, too. Is that what they really want? Is that what you really want? Is that what all of you out there really want?

And who do you really want dictating how your tax dollars are going to be spent? This is an NDP-Liberal coalition in the bud—maybe not so much in the bud. It is a race to drive Ontario into the ground. Liberal-NDP coalition: What a joke. It’s a volatile comedy of errors, but it is not a laughing matter, Speaker. This is an epic tragedy for Ontario. This is a prime example of failing to address the root cause of an issue.

Auto insurance fraud: \$1.6 billion a year. What could that buy? The anti-fraud task force was created in 2011 to produce regulatory changes. Have you seen any regulatory changes? I don’t think so. What’s the first change? The third party says, “We won’t vote for your budget unless you put in a 15% drop,” so they do it. That’s regulatory change. What nonsense.

There has been a lot of talk about the good work that it did. We saw no action. We need our economy to fire on all cylinders. With all of the guessing on the cost of moving the power plants, it’s kind of like Drew Carey from *The Price Is Right* is in the Premier’s office, and he’s yelling, “Come on down. Let’s spin the wheel. Actual retail price? Well, we’ll subpoena you to find out.” With your ill-fated and convoluted attempts to cover up the cost to taxpayers, there is no doubt that Liberal Xerox machines and black markers and whiteout all work.

I want to conclude this, Speaker, by saying a couple of things. We will hold your feet to the fire. We will get to

the bottom of that scandal. The need for this negligent government to cut spending has never been more urgent. As a matter of fact, the need for this negligent government to go has never been more urgent.

Ontarians, talk to your credit rating agencies. Renowned economists like Don Drummond agree that we must get our spending under control. Because of our increasing debt and the lack of a credible plan to eliminate it, both Moody’s and Standard and Poor’s questioned or downgraded Ontario’s credit ratings last year. That was the warning, the alert. Even the most eternal optimists know that we are in dire straits and that there will be no light at the end of the tunnel without immediate action. We need to send a serious signal to investors that Ontario is ready to tackle its economic challenges and get our financial house in order.

The Ontario PC Party believes that the government should assist Ontario families, not cause a further strain on household finances. The same players and the same story for the past nine and a half years—Speaker, it has to stop. We need a government that delivers on its promises. Balancing the books by 2017-18 will be mathematically impossible. There is no plan to get our economy back on solid ground—no new jobs, no leadership, no backbone. The only alternative is clear: The Ontario PCs have a plan to get Ontario moving again and get our fiscal house in order to regain lost jobs in this province. That, Speaker, is precisely what we intend to do. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I’m pleased to recognize the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Orders of the day?

**Hon. John Milloy:** As is the tradition, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1451.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margarett R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margarett R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short







# STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

## Education Week

Hon. Liz Sandals ..... 1797

## Dutch Heritage Month

Hon. Yasir Naqvi ..... 1797

## Education Week

Mr. Rob E. Milligan ..... 1798

## Dutch Heritage Month

Mr. Ernie Hardeman ..... 1798

## Dutch Heritage Month

Mr. John Vanthof ..... 1799

## Education Week

Mr. Michael Prue ..... 1799

# PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

## Air quality

Mr. John O'Toole ..... 1800

## Hospital services

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 1800

## Electoral boundaries

Ms. Soo Wong ..... 1800

## Children's psychiatric medication

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette ..... 1801

## Cycling

Mr. Jonah Schein ..... 1801

## Electoral boundaries

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn ..... 1801

## Ontario College of Trades

Mr. Randy Pettapiece ..... 1802

## Physiotherapy services

Mr. Michael Prue ..... 1802

## Markdale hospital

Mr. Bill Walker ..... 1802

## Social assistance

Mr. Jonah Schein ..... 1802

## Workplace insurance

Mr. Jim McDonnell ..... 1803

## Ontario College of Trades

Mr. Norm Miller ..... 1803

## Wind turbines

Mr. Jim Wilson ..... 1803

## Ontario College of Trades

Mr. Robert Bailey ..... 1803

# ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

## 2013 Ontario budget

Mr. Tim Hudak ..... 1803

Mr. Peter Shurman ..... 1808

Debate adjourned ..... 1812



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 6 May 2013 / Lundi 6 mai 2013

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Michael Chan .....	1783
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	1783
Mr. Rick Bartolucci .....	1783
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	1783
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	1783

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Ontario budget

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1783
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1784

### Ontario budget

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	1784
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1785

### Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1786
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1786

### Ontario budget

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	1786
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1786

### Power plants

Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1787
Hon. John Milloy .....	1787

### Home care

Mme France Gélinas .....	1788
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1788

### Home care

Mrs. Laura Albanese .....	1788
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1788

### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	1789
Hon. John Milloy .....	1789

### Automobile insurance

Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	1790
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1790

### Youth employment

Mr. Bas Balkissoon .....	1790
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	1790

### Government's record

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1791
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1791
Hon. John Milloy .....	1791

## Casinos

Mr. Michael Prue .....	1791
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1791

## Emergency preparedness

Mr. Grant Crack .....	1792
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	1792

## Power plants

Mr. Rob Leone .....	1792
Hon. John Milloy .....	1792

## Hospital services

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1793
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1793

## Justice system

Ms. Helena Jaczek .....	1794
Hon. John Gerretsen .....	1794

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Bill Walker .....	1794
Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1794

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Volunteers

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	1794
------------------------	------

### Hospital services

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1795
-------------------------------	------

### Canada's Wonderland

Mr. Steven Del Duca .....	1795
---------------------------	------

### Norfolk Arts Centre exhibition

Mr. Toby Barrett .....	1795
------------------------	------

### Flooding in northern Ontario

Mr. John Vanthof .....	1795
------------------------	------

### Birmingham Bank Bed Challenge

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1796
------------------------------	------

### Mental health

Mrs. Christine Elliott .....	1796
------------------------------	------

### Anniversary of Polish Constitution

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1796
--------------------------	------

### South Asian community

Mr. Todd Smith .....	1797
----------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*



No. 37

N° 37

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

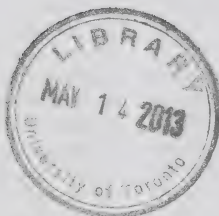
Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 7 May 2013**

**Mardi 7 mai 2013**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 7 May 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 7 mai 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### 2013 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 6, 2013, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's my pleasure to rise today and begin the New Democrat debate on the budget motion that was brought forward last week.

I want to start by framing my discussion with a little bit about myself, to be honest with you. I'm a daughter of an auto worker. My family depended on a steady paycheque to put food on our table and to keep a roof over our head. I'm proud of where I come from, but I also know that times are changing in this province.

We face new challenges. Some people think that meeting these challenges means letting people fall behind. I've seen what happens, though, when a breadwinner suddenly loses a good job, and I've met families across this province who are facing some pretty tough decisions these days: Do we sign the little one up for hockey or do we pay the electricity bill? Do we pay for piano lessons or do we insure the car? Over half of Ontarians say that they struggle to pay the bills and if they miss just one paycheque they don't know if they'll be able to make it.

Economists tell us that household debt and economic insecurity are a drag on the economy. They tell us that the growing economic gap that's squeezing families out of the middle class is squeezing momentum out of our economic growth. But it doesn't take an economist to convince me or to convince my New Democratic caucus that it's people who are the economy in this province. So if our economy is going to work, families need to be looking to the future with some confidence. That means we need to focus not just on economic growth but on growth that creates good jobs and real investment in Ontario.

You know, our province has depended on manufacturing for decades, but global forces are putting pressure on that sector in North America and across Europe, and of course Ontario is caught in that situation as well. But we face added hurdles in this province. We have the

highest electricity rates in the country, and I dare say in the entirety of North America. That's what Ontario faces.

You know, I have to say that it's no myth that Ontario has lost far too many manufacturing jobs. Over the last eight years in Ontario, 30% of manufacturing jobs have disappeared, and these were exactly the kinds of jobs that fueled our economy, the kinds of jobs with pensions, the kinds of jobs with health benefits and the kinds of jobs with wages that paid almost \$25 an hour.

Over the last decade, governments have focused their efforts on improving productivity investment. This is one of the things that we've heard from governments both federal and provincial: Productivity investment is the focus. We have to get more productivity investment in our nation and in our province. But instead of improving, productivity has actually slowed down. The growth in productivity is going in the opposite direction, and investment as a share of GDP in this province has declined steadily—not just since the recession, not just since 2008, but for at least the last decade. This is having a real impact on the business climate, but it's also having a real impact on the everyday people who make this province work day in and day out.

Now, some of my friends, particularly in the Conservative benches, believe that the way to deal with this is to start driving down wages, to try to take a path like states in the US. They think that the best thing for Ontario to do is to become the next Alabama. I know that the race to the bottom, and New Democrats know that the race to the bottom, is not a path for prosperity for the province of Ontario. In fact, the provinces that are outperforming us right now didn't do it by driving down wages, and they didn't do it by closing hospital beds and hospitals the way the Liberals are doing here in Ontario. They didn't do it by slashing strategic supports for businesses that rely on those supports to succeed. They did it by working with job creators and incentivizing job creation.

I know that not everyone will agree with me, but across-the-board reductions—cuts—in corporate taxes are not producing the results that we need in Ontario. The evidence is very clear. So whether your ideological perspective, being a Liberal or a Conservative, is that corporate tax reductions actually bring results, the evidence is clear that that simply is not the case. It's a failed direction that has been followed perilously by Liberal government after Liberal government after Conservative government after Liberal government. It does not work, Speaker. It is failing the people of this province.

If we're going to embrace opportunity for the future of the people of this province, then we need to do things



differently. We need to do better for them, Speaker. So what New Democrats have been doing is putting forward some positive ideas to achieve just that. As I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, we know that the government brought their budget forward last week in terms of their motion, and now we have an important decision to make. But New Democrats have been pretty clear: We want to see a balanced approach with a budget that's accountable to people, a budget that tackles people's concerns about creating jobs and growing our economy while helping them in their daily lives and balancing the books in a balanced way.

We've worked hard to put the issues that matter to people on the agenda, and we put some very simple, affordable proposals forward—ideas that would make small but very real differences for people. People told us they were worried about youth unemployment. They want to see young people finding good jobs and new careers, not waiting in their parents' basements until they're 30 years old to try to find a job. I have a son who's 20, Speaker; that makes me very worried as a mom, I have to tell you. So what did we do? We put our First Start plan together—a modest incentive to encourage companies that were ready to put young people to work.

People told us that they were worried about home care for their aging parents and loved ones. Some seniors are waiting as long as 262 days in this province to get the home care that they need. That is not acceptable, Speaker, and we know that depending on the region in which you live in this province, it will determine how long you're waiting for home care services. So what did we do? We proposed a modest investment to ensure that everyone approved for home care gets a guarantee that they'll receive it in five days and that real, immediate focus is put on getting rid of the 6,100-person-long waiting list for home care in this province, which is a tragedy for the people who are still on that list to this day.

0910

Speaker, people told us that they couldn't keep up with the cost of living. Ontario drivers pay the highest auto insurance rates in the entire country despite reforms that have dramatically reduced people's benefits and put more money in the pockets of the insurance companies in the province. So what did we do? We came up with a proposal that very clearly says it is achievable and the responsible thing to do—it's the fair and balanced thing to do—to actually bring the rates of Ontario drivers' insurance down by 15%. For us, it makes more sense than to put it in the pockets of insurance companies, because in the pockets of the people of this province their lives become better and more affordable. That's why we have that as one of our requests for the budget.

People told us that they want the budget to be fair; they want the budget to be balanced. They're tired of seeing their money spent by the Liberal government year after year after year without any guidelines, without any outcomes, without any clear results. We proposed eliminating some tax measures that weren't clearly linked to

creating jobs or increasing Ontario's productivity so we could focus on measures that work. We also proposed cost-saving measures like bulk purchasing to achieve effectiveness. Speaker, the tragedy of it all is that not a single one of these ideas was actually taken up by the Liberals in their budget as they read it last week.

People told us they were tired of being ignored by governments that seemed more concerned with themselves, more concerned with their own political skin, with their own political opportunity, with their own political well-being than they were with everyday people, than they were with the people who elected them. So we put the people's issues on the agenda. Now is the important part, because we want to see accountable results. That's the least that the people of this province deserve, for a change.

Our budget proposals were designed to make life better for the people who make our province work, but they also aimed to rebuild the trust with the public. We made it clear that Ontario should go no deeper into debt, and in fact didn't need to had our proposals been implemented as we set them out.

So now we're hearing from Ontarians. We've been hearing from them for the last couple of days. There is no doubt that people are concerned that Ms. Wynne and her Liberal government have not learned the lessons of their government's billion-dollar eHealth scandal, the \$700-million scandal at Ornge, the half-billion-dollar gas plant scandal—they have not learned their lessons. People need to know that the government will be investing public dollars wisely, carefully, smartly, and with the people as a priority. They need to know that in tough economic times every single dollar is being put to good use.

Now, as a New Democrat, I have lots of positive examples to look to where my party in government has actually led the way in that regard. New Democrat governments have run fewer deficit budgets than any other political party across this country. We have done better than the Liberals and we have done better than the Conservatives, and we have run smaller deficits as a ratio to GDP when they've had to be run. We've achieved these results by taking a balanced approach and looking carefully at our respective provinces' revenues and expenditures.

The results we delivered in the last budget took some positive steps towards that very same type of goal. We didn't get everything we wanted last year but we got good results. We got good, concrete results that moved us closer to our deficit reduction goals and made people's lives better in Ontario.

So now we're looking to this budget and we're asking the people of this province, what's the best way to keep moving toward this goal? We want to hear from people from all walks of life about some important issues. How can we make the budget more accountable to Ontarians and make government more transparent? What kind of cost-saving measures do people want to see so that we can balance our budget without deep and harmful cuts?

What are realistic and affordable ways that we can fund transportation infrastructure and transit? What guarantees do people think are important so that when the government makes a promise, we can make sure that they actually keep that promise? Are there ways to ensure that the budget is fair to everyone in the province, so that a family looking for home care in Chatham-Kent gets the same outcome as a family in Toronto or a family in Kenora, London, Windsor, Sault Ste. Marie or Peterborough?

We actually know that our province can't succeed over time while under the burden of a huge debt, but we know also that how we tackle that problem is extremely important. Much of the deficit that we're currently running may have been necessary to protect good jobs, or to protect some jobs, during the economic downturn. But now we need a responsible long-term plan to get back into balance, one that doesn't put an already shaky economic recovery at risk or put more pressure on households that are already feeling the squeeze. We only need to look at what's happening in current economic debate about the fallacy of the things that happened in Europe, and we're watching those communities fall apart, those nations fall apart, because of the action that they took on ill-advised advice that was more based on ideology than facts, Speaker.

There's no doubt—I don't think anybody in this chamber, anybody in this province, believes that we are not still in challenging times. But I believe there is hope too. I'm not offering easy solutions. I'm not promising quick fixes, because reckless, short-term thinking is not the way to improve our economy. I don't have all the answers, but I'm not afraid—or embarrassed, for that matter—to take advice from the very good people who make this province work day in and day out.

You know what, Speaker? I'm committed to building wealth for Ontario and for every Ontarian. I'm listening. New Democrats are listening. We owe it to our kids. We owe it to our families. We owe it to each other to make sure that we create a shared prosperity in this province, a prosperity that every Ontarian can share in. That should be our goal. That is certainly the goal of New Democrats, on this side of the House.

But we are only going to be able to do that if the people are able to rebuild their trust with government. We believe that by showing them that governments can be held to account, that governments, if not naturally—because that's obviously a problem with the Liberals—can in some ways structurally be forced to respect their dollars and be held accountable for their dollars, then we can actually begin to rebuild that trust, and that's the very least that Ontarians deserve.

So, over the next while, Speaker, that's what we're doing. We're working with Ontarians to make sure they know that there's at least one party that understands not how fed up they are with the behaviour of the Liberal government, and that we're actually putting some things forward to try to make it different and make it better, instead of just washing our hands and walking away. We

don't know where that's going to end up; we're going to find out in the next little while.

New Democrats came here under the minority situation with clear marching orders from the people of this province. Those marching orders were, "Go there and get some results for us. Get some things done for the people of Ontario." That's what we did in the last budget; that's what we're attempting to do with this budget. We'll see over the next little while how well we're able to keep the government to account, because it's not good enough just to pay lip service to the proposals that New Democrats put forward.

We want real results. We want real action. We know that's what Ontarians want, and that's what Ontarians deserve. Our job, Speaker, is to try to make that happen for Ontarians, and we're going to do our damndest to do exactly that.

I move adjournment of the debate, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** We have moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Orders of the day?

**Hon. John Milloy:** No further business, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** This House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 0920 to 1030.*

## WEARING OF RIBBONS

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear ribbons in recognition of the International Awareness Day for myalgic encephalomyelitis, fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Unanimous consent was asked, to wear the ribbons. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I also believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear ribbons in recognition of Child and Youth Mental Health Week today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We've been asked for unanimous consent to wear the ribbon. Agreed? Agreed.

It is now time for introduction of guests.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'd like to welcome Tracey, Leonard and Sarah Starrett from Whitby. They're the parents and sister of page Daniel Starrett, who is page captain today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Today is World Asthma Day, and I'm delighted to introduce George Habib from the Ontario Lung Association, Chris Markham from



Ophea, and Rob Oliphant from the Asthma Society of Canada.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I know there are a number of folks in the galleries today representing their local ME association. I'd like to recognize the Brockville ME Association president, Shirley Michael, and all of the members. Although they're not here today, they're with us in spirit.

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** I happened to look to my right here, in the members' gallery, and I want to recognize some people from the Niagara region. Maybe they've already been introduced yesterday, but I'm going to introduce them again today. That's the regional chair, Gary Burroughs, who was also the Lord Mayor of Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake at one time; and my friend Councillor Barbara Greenwood is here as well. To everyone else who is up there: Welcome.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like to welcome the member from Newmarket–Aurora here this morning. I know he had a very difficult evening last night. But take it from me, as a team member from the Ottawa Senators: When you're ahead 2-1 in a series, it feels really good, and when you're behind 2-1 in a series, I can only imagine how hurtful that is, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let's save those until after introduction of guests, and I promise to give the member from Newmarket–Aurora equal time.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I'm very happy to introduce three summer interns in my office, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. They're three university students: Alia Hussain, Galen Harris and Cecily McKnight. They are really looking forward to delving into all of the issues that we're dealing with at aboriginal affairs. So welcome.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Some may have been introduced already, but I want to make sure there's a complete list. Niagara region is here for its special week at Queen's Park, and among those who are here today—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. James J. Bradley:**—despite the heckling from the other side, I will still introduce them—are Regional Chair Gary Burroughs, Pelham Mayor Dave Augustyn, Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati, Councillor David Barrick, Councillor Brian Baty, Councillor Barbara Greenwood, Councillor Bruce Timms, CAO Mike Trojan, Ken Brothers, Debbie Elliott, Patrick Robson, Diane Simsovic and Matt Robinson. They're all with us today. Welcome.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'd like to introduce Sandra Gibbons, who is a student of mine visiting today. She had a media advisory day with the Lung Association about making our schools safer for children with asthma.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** This is Nursing Week, and today is Registered Practical Nurses Day here at Queen's Park. We've got a number of RPNs here with SEIU: Joanne Kilmartin, Christine Peacock, Mary Lee Turcotte, Roudlyn Henry, Kim MacDougall, Anna Maria Makris, Kelly Brew, Jackie Weller, Laurann Edwards, Dernel George, Evelyn Belchoir and Mena Amrith. Please, I know you all want to welcome the RPNs to Queen's Park today.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I want to introduce one of our summer interns at the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Alexandra Sherwin, who is joining us for a great summer of work. Alexandra, welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Newmarket–Aurora on a point of order.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I want to express my appreciation to my colleague the member from Nepean–Carleton. What I want to remind her of, and all of the Senators fans here—I think there are two of them—is that it's not how you start out; it's how you end up. The Toronto Maple Leafs are pacing themselves. We want this to be a long series and a successful one.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** We have representatives from SEIU today. They represent over 45,000 workers. Some 8,000 of them are registered practical nurses, and quite a few of them are here with us today.

The first thing I want to say is, we have this tiny, weeny little issue that some of them are wearing their scrubs because they came from work. The Sergeant-at-Arms won't let them come in because they're wearing scrubs. I would ask for unanimous consent to let the nurses come in in their nursing uniforms.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm going to come back to the member from Timmins–James Bay. I believe it was a point of order—or introduction?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** One moment.

I do have a comment on this particular issue before I ask for the unanimous consent. There are rules that this House has about the wearing of any kind of identifiable uniform or issue. I've instructed the Sergeant-at-Arms, when groups book lobby days, that they will be receiving a one-page outline of the rules of this House. Regrettably, undue pressure is being put on the Sergeant-at-Arms for following the rules.

**Interjection:** I love the Sergeant-at-Arms.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You'd better.

I am asking all members to co-operate with what the rules are. If they do bring individuals or guests, I'm reminding them to follow the rules: that this House be not used as a place of protest inside while we're doing it; and that, in the future, a one-page outline will be provided to all lobby days and all groups and individuals who plan to be here about what they can and can't wear.

Now I will deal in respect to the request for unanimous consent. The member from Nickel Belt has asked for unanimous consent for the practical nurses to wear their scrubs, as they have been arriving from work. Do we agree? Agreed. Thank you.

The member from Timmins–James Bay—

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I wasn't done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You weren't done. You were asking for unanimous consent. That usually shuts you down. Are you introducing another guest?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Well, I wanted to introduce them. I was not allowed to introduce them because they were not allowed in. But now they will be making their way in, and I will introduce them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Proceed.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you so much for your great indulgence toward me, Mr. Speaker. Here we go. They should be making their way in as I speak.

We have Joanne Kilmartin, Mary Lee Turcotte, Kim MacDougall, Roudlyn Henry, Anna Maria Makris, Kelly Brew, Laurann Edwards, Mena Amrith, Demell George, Jackie Weller, Christine Peacock and Evelyn Belchoir. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay on a point of order, or an introduction?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what all this fuss about Ottawa and Toronto is. I'm a Montreal fan, and all I have to say is: Go, Habs, go.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** As the member may know what my position is, it's not a point of order, but thank you.

1040

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### POWER PLANTS

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is to the Premier. Just one week ago, we heard some damning testimony from the Ontario Power Authority's CEO, Colin Andersen. In his testimony, he stated that everyone, including you, knew that the cost to cancel the Oakville power plant was far higher than the \$40 million that your Liberal government claimed.

Premier, unlike the NDP, we're here to hold you accountable with respect to these decisions. When did you know that the cost was far higher than \$40 million, and will you finally apologize to taxpayers for not letting them know what you knew when you knew it?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I did appear before the committee for an hour and a half. I answered all of the questions. I said that I was going to do that. I followed through and I have done everything in my power to make sure that all of the information, all of the documents were available, and that the committee had the scope to be able to ask the questions that it needed to ask.

I want to be very clear that I take full responsibility now for putting in place a plan that will improve the siting of large energy infrastructure in the future. We made an announcement yesterday: We're going to work to develop a new regional energy planning process. There will be the components of strong public consultation, formal municipal input, a better decision-making process. That's what we need to take from this exercise.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Well, Premier, over the past few days you've been asked on multiple television and radio shows to apologize for spending more than \$600 million to cancel gas plants. You were even pushed by Matt Galloway on Metro Morning to apologize; you

refused. Premier, hard-working Ontarians deserve accountability. They deserve to know that every one of their tax dollars is treated with respect and not indifference. We won't be sidetracked by a couple of splashy expenditures. We will do what the people of Ontario have elected us to do, and that is to hold you accountable. Premier, as leader of the province, don't you owe taxpayers an apology, or will you continue to put party ahead of province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I respect—I absolutely respect—the role of the opposition and its responsibility to push government, to ask difficult questions and to force open difficult issues. I have not been resistant to that. I have opened up the process. I have been very open and transparent about making sure that all documentation—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Stormont, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —be made available, by making sure that there was a process in place. Remember, Mr. Speaker, we suggested a select committee.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Oxford, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We suggested that the mandate of the justice committee be broadened so that all questions could be asked. I have said repeatedly that I regret that the decisions were not made differently. I regret that the upfront process was not better and that the decision was made to locate the gas plants in that place in the first place. We need a better process going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** Premier, it's pretty clear that you don't really think you owe us anything on this side of the House, but I think that at a cost of \$600 million—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Government House leader, come to order.

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** —taxpayers deserve an apology from you. They've paid enough for it. You are the leader of the Liberal Party. You're also the leader of this province. Isn't it time to act with leadership and take ownership of this decision? Premier, you've been asked in committee, you've been asked in this House multiple times, but still you continue to dodge the question, so I'm going to ask you—and Ontarians deserve an answer to this—will you finally apologize to the taxpayers of Ontario for the \$600 million that you spent to save a few Liberal seats?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, I think the member opposite actually hit on something very important when she raised the issue of ownership. I have taken ownership of this issue. I have said clearly that our government—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member for Northumberland, come to order.



**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:**—implemented a decision that was agreed to by all of the parties, but we took the responsibility to implement that decision.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Your timing was awful; the member from Northumberland, come to order. Just as I got it quiet—that's timing. Everyone else, just kind of bring it down.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I take responsibility for a process that was not right. I take responsibility for putting in place a new process. I regret that the process was what it was, I wish that we had not been in this situation, but my responsibility is to the people of Ontario. The opposition has a role in forcing open those issues, and we've been working with them.

We're going to develop a new regional energy policy: strong public consultation, formal municipal input, better decision-making—the right location at the beginning—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:**—OPA and IESO to report—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Premier, Dalton McGuinty followed the same dodge-and-weave approach at the justice committee this morning in an attempt to do what he's always done, and that is to put the Liberal Party's interests ahead of the interests of the people. He failed to be forthright to the same question that you, Premier, failed to answer 32 times last week: When did you know that the Oakville gas plant cancellation was more than \$40 million? We have sworn testimony from several witnesses, including Colin Andersen of the Ontario Power Authority, who swore everybody in the government knew it was more than \$40 million.

Premier, you had eight cabinet interactions with these gas plant deals. We know you know the answer. When did you know the Oakville cancellation cost was more than \$40 million?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the government House leader is going to want to speak to the details of the committee interaction today.

But I will just say that I appeared at committee; I answered the questions that I was asked. I was there for an hour and a half, and I answered every question that was asked of me. I told the members of the committee what I know, and thereby doing, the people of Ontario know what I knew and when I knew it.

I have been clear that what we need to do now is, we need to make sure this doesn't happen again, that we have a better process going forward for locating and siting these large infrastructure projects. That's what the process is about. That is the process we are developing: regional energy plans. That is why the IESO and the

OPA will report by August 1 on that new process that will have strong municipal input and a strong consultative component.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Just a reminder before you ask your supplementary: I remind all members that any member in this House is to be referred to either by their riding or their title.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Well, that's not quite accurate, Premier. I asked you, and the member from Nepean—Carleton asked you, 32 different times, when you knew. We still have not received that answer from you.

But your predecessor told the justice committee this morning that he had no limit to the cost he was willing to spend to cancel these power plants. He tried to insist he didn't know anything about the costs of the Oakville and Mississauga cancellations when documents showed he knew everything, and in fact his staff actually negotiated with the Oakville proponent. Documents show there were government-instructed counter-offers over three times. Several witnesses have testified to the buckets of costs that were well known.

Premier, I ask you again, who knew? The answer we got from Colin Andersen was everybody. I'll ask you, tell us the date when you knew the Oakville cancellation was more than \$40 million.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I can't help but comment how amusing it is that we're having a discussion here today about various witnesses in front of the committee, including the current Premier, the former Premier, two former Ministers of Energy who have come forward, and yet we still await to hear from the Progressive Conservative Party. We await the testimony of the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** This is getting ridiculous. I'm getting heckling from the person on the side who's giving the answer. So, please, control yourselves—and the same thing on the other side.

Carry on.

**Hon. John Milloy:** We're awaiting to hear from the Leader of the Opposition about his costing, about his analysis, about his—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And I'll ask the member from Stormont to come to order. You got me up. That means something.

Carry on.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, we want to hear from the Leader of the Opposition about his analysis, about his costing while he went out, starred in a YouTube video surrounded by adoring candidates and told people that if he was elected Premier, it would be "Done, done, done."

We have been forthcoming on this side. Perhaps the honourable member, in his supplementary, will talk about when the Leader of the Opposition and when various PC candidates will—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'm glad you are amused, House leader. Unfortunately, the taxpayers of Ontario are not amused with your \$585-million bill.

Premier, you said these gas plant cancellations were political decisions. Basically, you and your former leader rolled the dice in order to win a majority government, trying to win those five seats, which you ended up winning. Sadly, it did not give you the majority government. You're one seat shy, which is why the PC—

*Interjections.*

1050

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Sadly for you; luckily for the province of Ontario and the taxpayers. That's why our party and the NDP have the majority in the committees. That's why we actually have these hearings today.

In 2011, Dalton McGuinty was Premier and you were vice-chair of the campaign. You signed off on the cabinet minutes for this Oakville deal. Your government can't be trusted, Premier. Will you call our confidence motion to the floor for a vote?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Let's remind everyone who Geoff Janoscik is. He was the Progressive Conservative candidate in Mississauga South—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean—Carleton—again, it's a timing thing—come to order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Timing is everything.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No. No other words said. Thank you. On both sides. Please finish.

**Hon. John Milloy:** He sent out thousands of robocalls to the citizens of Mississauga South saying the only way to cancel the gas plant was to vote for Tim Hudak and the Progressive Conservatives. We have called him before the committee several times and he has told the Clerk to stop calling him.

Let's talk about Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan, who put out this brochure to thousands of people in his riding saying, "The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party. On October 6, vote Ontario PC." She agreed to come to the committee and at the last minute suspiciously declined and has refused to appear yet. Mr. Speaker, I could go on—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. No, you won't. New question.

## POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. In tough times, people need to know that public dollars are being managed responsibly and well. As we look at the budget proposed by this government, those questions are more important than ever, especially when we consider the hundreds of millions of dollars Liberals spent cancelling private power deals in Oakville and Mississauga. Can the Premier tell us whether the govern-

ment knew what the cost would be when cancelling those private power deals or whether they just didn't care?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much. Again, I have gone before committee and I have answered the questions that were asked of me. The reality is, the relocation of these large infrastructure projects was going to cost money. It's unfortunate and I have said I regret that, but the reality is that every party in this House believed that those gas plants should not be located in those places. All of the candidates were campaigning in that community on cancelling those gas plants.

So it's true: We implemented that decision. We took the responsibility to implement a decision that everyone in this House agreed to. It's unfortunate that there wasn't a better process in place. Our responsibility is to make sure that, going forward, we have a better process so we will not be in this position again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I want to ask the Premier a question that her predecessor refused to answer this morning: Was there any limit to what the government was prepared to spend?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much. You know, I understand that the leader of the third party wants the answers to these questions, but we have provided the answers. We made a decision that the gas plants needed to be relocated. We then had to enter into a negotiation, and that was what was undertaken, because it was the right decision to move those gas plants. The people in the communities made it very clear. It was politicians who decided that we would respond and that we would move those gas plants, as both opposition parties agreed to. We implemented that decision. There was a cost attached to it. We need a better process going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, no matter how much the Premier refuses to acknowledge it, I was actually asking a question. How much would it cost before we were prepared to actually tear up any contracts?

But you know what? The government signed the contracts. They knew what was in those contracts. The government had some of the highest-paid legal advice going. They knew what the cost would be. The last Premier knew that the cost was going to be high, and this Premier knew as well that it was going to be high, but at every stage of the process the Liberal government has done everything they could to hide the real cost and the details from the public who would be paying the bills.

Is the Premier not only ready, finally, to apologize but to even go one better, Speaker, and acknowledge that this government has failed to make transparent and accountable decisions and that this needs to change for the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, the leader of the New Democratic Party can't have it both ways. Her can-



didates were out in both Oakville and Mississauga, talking about the opposition to the power plant. Let me quote from what was said in front of the justice committee.

Frank Clegg, chairman for Citizens for Clean Air: "We met with all the parties and all the candidates and were given commitments by every candidate in the Oakville area that they would support cancelling the plant."

He went on to say, "C4CA was very pleased that all parties publicly committed to stop the construction of the proposed Oakville plant...."

Let me tell you about Greg Rohn, Coalition of Homeowners for Intelligent Power. He told the justice committee, yes, "The NDP were against the plant...."

Mayor Hazel McCallion, Mr. Speaker, someone I wouldn't want to mess with: She said, "The impression that was certainly given beyond a doubt ... I think all parties would have cancelled it; there's no question about it."

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party, the Liberal Party—we all had the exact same position.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier, Speaker. The Premier knows these are tough times. People need to know that their money is actually being spent in a way that is responsible and that is accountable. Instead, they see the government waste half a billion dollars on gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga, and watched as one Premier after another tried to prevent them from seeing these costs, tried to hide those costs from them.

New Democrats think the budget needs some accountability, because the people are tired of seeing scarce dollars spent as if it's the personal bankroll of the governing party. Does the Premier understand why people deserve to see more accountability in their government?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I just really have to disagree with the premise of the question in the sense that since I have been in this office, I have done everything in my power to open up this process and to allow for the questions to be asked and answered and for documentation to be available.

I wrote to the AG, the Auditor General, on Oakville, to look at the Oakville situation. He agreed to do that. I immediately called the House back. We struck committees. We expanded the scope of the committee, because the way the questions were being asked, they were very narrow, and I thought that the committee needed to be able to look at the whole situation. We offered documents from across government. I appeared at the committee. The committee has been meeting since February and has heard from 25 witnesses.

I have done everything possible to open up this process and to be accountable to the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker. That is my responsibility, and more than that, I take responsibility for a better process going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** There's one thing that the Premier misses, and that's the fact that the people actually want answers: not just the process to get there, but the actual answers.

Today the former Premier testified at the justice committee, the Premier who famously said, "On the matter of the cost, Speaker, it's \$40 million ... we've nailed that down." But of course, that wasn't even close to accurate.

Does the Premier understand that a justifiably skeptical public wants to see a government that's accountable to them when it comes to public money?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I absolutely do understand that. I understand that, and that is the reason that when I came into this office, I said the process needed to be opened up so that answers could be found. I am as frustrated as the leader of the third party that the numbers have changed, that it has been very difficult in this complex issue to nail down numbers.

But at the same time, I don't think that the people of Ontario would want us not to talk about how to move forward, how to put a better process in place, how to make sure that we get a budget passed that actually will deal with some of the things that are affecting their everyday lives: making sure that youth unemployment strategy is in place; making sure that we are going to be able to invest in the roads and bridges in their communities so companies will come to their communities; making sure that we're putting the business supports in place so manufacturing can flourish and we can bring business to the province.

I think that some of the issues—many of the issues—the leader of the third party has raised are addressed in our budget, and I hope she will work with us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

1100

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, there's one thing the Premier fails to recognize, Speaker, and that is people want their government to treat them with respect and their money with prudence—that's all they want. But then they see their government waste half a billion dollars on gas plants just to put a few Liberal Party members first.

They expect their government to be fiscally responsible so that we can afford to put families first, not Liberals. But instead, they see a government that barely paid lip service to closing brand new tax loopholes that will cost Ontarians \$1.3 billion, not just once but every single year.

Will the Premier admit that her budget falls badly short on accountability and transparency?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I really believe the people of Mississauga and Oakville deserve to have a voice in this. I know that there have been voices raised on this. They were very concerned about the location of those gas plants and their representatives raised those issues over and over again and made it clear that it was not a good idea for those gas plants to be located there, which is why

candidates from all three parties were campaigning and saying that all three parties were committed to relocating those gas plants.

I have the deepest of respect for the people of Ontario and I have the deepest of respect for the people who live in all of the communities in Ontario. That's why we acted on the promise that had been made by all three parties. That's why we've written a budget that focuses on getting people jobs and helping them in their everyday lives. I hope the third party will work with us on that.

### POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** To the Premier: Earlier this morning, Dalton McGuinty appeared before committee and said—I withdraw, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Old habit.

The member from Ottawa South testified at committee and said it was the “right thing to do” to cancel those power plants in the middle of an election. You admitted last week that it was a political decision, so we can only conclude it was the right thing to do politically for the Liberal Party of Ontario.

Earlier today he also refused to acknowledge how much was too much in order to cancel those power plants and save those seats. We don't know: \$1 billion, \$2 billion, \$3 billion—he wouldn't say.

We also know that Shelly Jamieson, JoAnne Butler, Colin Andersen, David Livingston and David Lindsay all said that you knew from the outset how much this was.

Are you refusing to tell the assembly what you knew and when you knew it, in terms of those costs, because you are afraid that your caucus and you will be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I went before committee; I told the committee what I know. I know the government House leader is going to want to speak to the details of the committee actions. But Mr. Speaker, I'm not afraid. I was not afraid to go to committee. I was not afraid to say what I knew. I believe categorically that the decision that was made was in the best interest of the people of Mississauga and the people of Oakville, and we need a better process going forward.

On the issue of the political decision, I have said quite clearly that it was a decision that was made by politicians, and it was a decision that was going to be made by Liberal politicians or Conservative politicians or NDP politicians. That is the extent to which it was a political decision. We all agreed those gas plants should be relocated. We implemented that decision, and I've been very open about that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** With all due respect, Premier, I don't want to hear from the government House leader. You own this. You were the campaign chair for the Liberal Party. You signed the memorandum to cabinet. You are now the Premier of Ontario. You knew the true

cost and you have not told this assembly what that true cost is despite my colleague from Nipissing and I asking you 32 times in committee, asking you exactly what those other testimonies said you knew. You knew from the outset it was over \$40 million. You made this decision to save seats, including the finance minister who sits beside you.

Our question back to you, Premier, not to the government House leader: Are you withholding what you knew and when you knew it because your caucus, your cabinet and yourself would all be held in contempt?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Thornhill, come to order. The member from Whitby—Oshawa, the member who's not in her seat, come to order. The member from—and I'll go through, and the next time I'm throwing out. If you're testing my resolve, I'll win.

Carry on.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not surprised that the honourable member—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Renfrew, come to order. Last time.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'm not surprised that the honourable member doesn't want to hear from me because, unfortunately, I remind her of something, and that is the fact that her party aggressively campaigned against those plants and said that if they formed government, they would cancel it.

Geoff Janoscik, their candidate who will not appear in front of committee, told Mississauga News that only Conservative leader Tim Hudak will cancel the Eastern Power gas plant slated to be built on Loreland Ave. He tweeted, “An Ontario PC govt will stop the plant for good.” Mr. Speaker, he was involved in sending out thousands and thousands of robocalls and, my understanding is, helped greet the Leader of the Opposition as he toured the site and said that if he became Premier it would be “done, done, done.”

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You don't know when, but you'll be surprised.

New question.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** To the Premier: Premier, real leadership means asking tough questions, being account-



able. Why didn't the Premier ever ask her predecessor how much it cost to cancel the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants when she was on the campaign as co-chair, when she was signing cabinet documents or when she became Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think that is a legitimate and a good question. The reality is that there were negotiations that went on. It was a confidential negotiation, it was a business process, and as we have seen, there were not firm numbers available. We relied on the information that was given to us through the Ministry of Energy that came to them through the OPA. That is the reality. That is what I said at committee because that is the truth. We dealt with the numbers that were given us.

I think what's extremely important is, we put in place a better process going forward. We're proposing an improved regional planning process that would lead to better placement of these large pieces of energy infrastructure going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, the Liberal scandal over the cancellation of the gas plants caused the last Premier to lose his job, along with that of the Minister of Energy. Ontarians expect accountability, yet the former and current Premiers both say they never talked about costs, no matter that she was the co-chair of the election committee, the Liberal campaign, and she signed cabinet documents authorizing expenditure of funds, or when she was appointed Premier.

Ignoring these problems doesn't mean they're going to go away. Is that the sort of leadership we should expect?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The question of establishing costs has been a challenge from the beginning. I think everyone would agree with that.

The important point here, the important date, is September 24, 2012. On September 24, 2012, the OPA filed a 216-page contract which set out the sunk costs and set out a formula in terms of calculating the costs.

It's important to know that a couple of weeks ago, when the CEO of the Ontario Power Authority was here before committee, he came with two different costs. He also had provided a third different cost about two or three weeks earlier, and the opposition in that particular committee meeting had a fourth cost. We had the Auditor General—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

1110

## TRANSPORTATION

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** My question is for the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. As we all know, our government tabled a budget last week, a budget that's a road map to not just a prosperous Ontario but also a fair Ontario.

Speaker, I have to tell you this: I actually looked up the titles of the past 17 budgets, and never does the word—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's enough.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Speaker, I was just mentioning that I actually took the trouble to look at the titles of the last 17 budgets, and this is the first time the word "fair" or a word like "fair" pops up, a testimony to the values of this Premier and this government, and I'm very proud to be part of that.

Coming back to the question, I know that the budget speaks a lot about transit, and I just wanted the minister to speak in particular—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I guess you asked for it. The member from Northumberland—Quinte West is warned.

Carry on.

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Minister, if you could speak to the particulars of the transit plan in this budget. Thank you.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We are right now increasing our investments in transit over the next three years. We are starting this year with \$3.5 billion—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville, come to order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** —next year it grows to \$4 billion, and just over \$4 billion in 2015-16.

We're doing this for a very good reason, because Ontarians need to get to work, they need to get home, young people need to get to jobs, and transit is critical for that. So we see—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, come to order. The member from Huron, come to order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** —\$400 million going into the brand new beautiful subway cars operating in downtown Toronto; \$600 million on Ottawa's LRT, a really remarkable investment; in Kitchener—Waterloo, \$300 million in that community's remarkable RT, plus—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The test was put and I'm putting it. The member from Northumberland—Quinte West is named. If you guys haven't got the idea that I'm not happy right now, you'd better get it.

*Mr. Milligan was escorted from the chamber.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish you're answer, please.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have \$870 million right now in a trust, the MoveOntario trust, which is building the largest expansion of our subway system in decades.

This is resulting in 30,000 jobs for Ontarians across the province, which is a remarkable investment and a great return on investment in transit and employment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you, Minister, for that update on transit. I know that the constituents of Mississauga East—Cooksville will be very pleased to hear about our continued commitment to transit.

But the reality is that if you live in Mississauga, not everybody can take transit. A lot of my constituents do take the highway, so I also wanted to get an update on what this government and what our infrastructure plan has in store when it comes to our highways.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** The member, who has been such a great advocate for transit and transportation investment, is quite right, and there are synergies between the two. We are adding 16,000 new parking spaces on our GO lines, so if you are on your way into town and you're in traffic, you can jump onto a GO service as well.

But specifically on highways, we are widening key sections of Highway 401 in the GTHA and Highway 417 in Ottawa, Highways 11 and 17 between Thunder Bay and Nipigon, and the rather remarkable Herb Grey Parkway getting ready for the new bridge crossing in Windsor, which is critical to trade development. We have improvements to Highway 17 in Renfrew county, the 401 in Northumberland county and Highway 66 in northeastern Ontario. Finally, we have the planned extension of Highway 427 to Major Mackenzie in York region and new HOV lanes on sections of Highways 401, 404, 410 and 427.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Last week in the justice committee, you refused to answer the question as to when you knew that the cancellation of the Oakville gas plant would be exceeding \$40 million. In fact, you refused to answer that question no less than 32 times—this in spite of the fact that seven witnesses, including the OPA's CEO, Colin Andersen, testified under oath that you and all of your cabinet knew all along that the cost would exceed \$40 million.

A recent poll found that a large majority of Ontarians believe that your government has not been truthful about the cost of the Oakville plant cancellation and relocation that you've provided to the public. Premier, your credibility is in tatters. There's only one thing left to do: Call a want of confidence motion so that this assembly can decide on your fate.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I have said many times, I went to committee; I answered the questions that were put to me; I told the committee everything that I knew. That is part of my attempt to be as open as possible and to provide the answers and the documentation that were being asked for.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the confidence motion, we have a very large confidence issue before this House right now, and that is the budget. The budget speaks to the need to address issues that affect people's everyday lives. It speaks to the need to put in place the conditions to create jobs, to work with business, to make sure that young people have an opportunity to have a placement or a co-op or an internship so that they can have an opportunity to get into the workplace, because youth unemployment is an issue that we need to deal with. Those are the things that I believe we need to be dealing with right

now. I hope the member opposite is going to read the budget and that he may consider supporting us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I hardly think a budget co-written by you and the NDP is a confidence issue.

Premier, the obstructionist tactics by you and your Liberal Party are now well established. Your former staff have been shown to have a selective memory. Your government denies unequivocal evidence contained in released documents. Your government claims that sworn testimony by witnesses in committee is false. It is clear that your government will do anything to avoid coming clean and allowing the truth to get out. You're afraid to face the truth.

I don't know how any member of this House can prop up this government in good conscience.

I ask you again, Premier: Will you today call on this assembly to debate our want of confidence motion so this issue can be dealt with once and for all?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Afraid to face the truth? This is the Premier who, when she took over the office, asked the Auditor General to look into the matter and offered a select committee, which they rejected. She offered a complete document search across government. They rejected it.

If we want to talk about the truth, let's talk about Geoff Janoscik. Where is he? Why will he not appear in front of the committee?

Let's talk about Mary Anne DeMonte-Whelan. Why will she not appear in front of the committee and talk about her brochure that said, "The only party that will stop the Sherway power plant is the Ontario PC Party"?

And what about the leader of the Progressive Conservatives, who keeps saying he may show up at committee—maybe the 7th, but no; maybe the 14th, if it fits his schedule?

Mr. Speaker, when asked, the Premier was there, and the Leader of the Opposition should offer the same respect to this Legislature and to this committee.

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

Speaker, yesterday the committee heard from Medbuy, the company that contracted the outsourcing of the diluted chemo drugs. Their testimony was in stark contrast to that of Marchese, the supplier of the diluted chemo drugs. But all Ontario patients see is a lot of finger pointing, but none of the accountability, none of the oversight that they know is needed.



Will the minister admit that her office stood back and did nothing while oversight of our health care system vanished?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, I completely reject that notion.

I can tell you that we have one of the finest cancer care systems in the world. The member opposite has acknowledged that. We have an excellent cancer care system with very strong oversight, but we have learned that it was not perfect. We have learned that there are steps that need to be taken and that are being taken to be able to give the assurance to patients that when their doctor orders a drug, they get exactly that drug in exactly the concentration that was ordered.

That work is ongoing as we speak. We aren't wasting time. We're moving forward, fixing that issue.

We're also looking forward to the committee report and the report of Dr. Jake Thiessen, who is looking at the safety of the entire cancer drug supply chain.

1120

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** The minister has done nothing while outsourcing grew and, with it, the risk of errors. I asked Medbuy yesterday what they had done to mitigate that higher level of risk. Their answer was really clear: nothing. It's not their job. It's the Ministry of Health's job to provide oversight and accountability.

The truth is, they failed in their primary responsibility. Does the minister agree that it is time to adopt better measures of accountability and oversight so that Ontario's patients can start to rebuild their faith and trust in our health care system?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, you can rest assured that I am as committed to resolving this issue as anyone. It is people in London—in my community—who have been impacted by this, and other communities as well. I think everyone in London either knows someone or knows someone who knows someone who was impacted by this. We must pay attention; we must make the changes that will strengthen our system further, and that's exactly the work that Dr. Jake Thiessen is doing right now.

## ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

**Ms. Soo Wong:** My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Ontario has emerged as the largest live music market in both Canada and North America. It is a business that generates \$455 million in revenues and contributes \$252 million annually to the national economy.

To ensure that we truly become a world leader, constituents in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt have asked, what is the government doing to coordinate live music marketing and promotions planning? They want to know how Ontario is leveraging existing resources and creating opportunities to promote music while utilizing online resources.

Speaker, through you to the minister, what is the government doing to actively position Ontario as a global destination for live music and music tourism?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you for the question. I want to thank the member from Scarborough—Agincourt for asking.

Ontario's entertainment and creative industries support 300,000 jobs, generating \$20 billion for our economy. This is why, in our recent budget, we have committed to providing \$45 million in grants over three years, starting this year, for a new Ontario Music Fund. The fund will support Ontario's live music, positioning the province as a leading place to perform and record music.

In addition, our government is providing over \$5 million through Celebrate Ontario to host music festivals and events throughout the year. Through this funding, combined with our new Ontario Music Fund, we are strengthening Ontario's position on the map as a premier destination for live performances.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Soo Wong:** This news is music to my ears. I want to thank the minister for his leadership in ensuring that we turn up the volume on the world stage and bring Canadian recordings to a global audience. There's no doubt that the government's budgetary commitments will sharpen our competitive edge to make Ontario a global music capital.

The culture sector overall certainly plays a key role in driving an innovative, creative economy here in Ontario, and it contributes more than \$20 billion annually to that economy. I know that in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, hundreds of youths perform, create and seek out opportunities in the city and across Ontario.

Speaker, through you to the minister, what is the government doing to invest in the creative talents we so proudly possess in Ontario?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** In addition to the \$45-million Ontario Music Fund, we will also be providing \$8 million to support Massey Hall's revitalization. The renewal—

*Applause.*

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Thank you. The renewal of this iconic landmark will allow Massey Hall to continue to contribute to the growth of Ontario's performing arts scene as a fully functional modern venue. As well, our government will provide funding of \$9 million over three years to support the Canadian Film Centre, supporting educational programs for advanced film, television and new media.

Ontario's cultural scene is an incubator of great talent. This is why we will continue to invest and make our province a creative hub and a world-class destination. The bottom line is creating jobs and strengthening our economy.

## MANUFACTURING JOBS

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** My question today is for the Premier. Premier, within 72 hours of releasing your

big-spending, job-killing budget, two major manufacturing companies shut down their Ontario plants. Waterloo Furniture in Kitchener is relocating to Michigan, putting more than 230 people out of work, while heavy equipment giant Caterpillar is closing yet another Ontario factory, this time in Toronto, and throwing an additional 330 workers out of a job.

It is clear that Ontario's manufacturing sector no longer has confidence in the McGuinty-Wynne-Horwath government. Premier, will you explain how this House can have confidence in your government when your lack of leadership is driving away business and costing us Ontario jobs?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Of course, it is truly unfortunate and very upsetting to hear whenever a company chooses to close or relocate its business. We're obviously very concerned about the well-being of the workers and their families and are working hard with them—not only my ministry but the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. In fact, through our rapid re-employment and training services, within an hour of us being notified—one hour of being notified of a plant or facility closure—training, colleges and universities actually reaches out to the employer, as well as to the union. They've done so in both cases, both here in Toronto with Caterpillar and with Knappe and Vogt in Kitchener.

In the supplementary, because I don't want the viewers, let alone the opposition, not to be aware of the important things we're doing, I'll speak to that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Back to the Premier: What is sad is the reality that is facing the province of Ontario, and that is that we have nearly 600,000 men and women out of work and an unemployment rate of 7.7%. Even worse, Ontario's unemployment rate has been above the national average for 75 consecutive months.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Eglinton—Lawrence, come to order.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** With Ontario's interest payments set to rise to over \$14.5 billion per year, it is no—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop, please. While I was telling him to come to order, he was still barking. So, the member from Eglinton—Lawrence, come to order.

Carry on.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Oh.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, I don't need your help on that one.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** With Ontario's interest payments set to rise to over \$14.5 billion per year, it is no wonder that manufacturing companies are fleeing from

Ontario's huge debt, layers of red tape and Liberal gas plant scandals.

Premier, when will you admit that you and your government are not equipped to address the jobs and debt crisis in this province and, in fact, no longer hold the confidence of this House?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I still can't understand why the member opposite continues to beat down our businesses and manufacturers across this province.

Since the bottom of the recession, we've created nearly 400,000 new jobs. We brought back all of the jobs that were lost and then 50% more, including 50,000 just last year. In fact, in the auto sector just last month they had the best April since 2008. Manufacturing in February has gone up as well across the country, led by Ontario. In fact, in February it was four times the census estimate, and most of that actually has been through production.

We're working hard. I hope the member opposite sees in the budget and will support the efforts that we're making: \$295 million for youth employment; we've continued, for an additional three years, the accelerated capital cost allowance, which has been very well received by manufacturers—it's estimated at \$250 million; and we've increased the threshold for the employer health tax. These are the measures that Ontarians want that support our businesses.

## CASINOS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Premier. As racetracks across Ontario close down and thousands of related jobs are lost in rural Ontario, this government is trying to reshuffle the decks and devise a special casino hosting deal for Toronto. Now, the Doug Ford booster club to the extreme right of me are evidently big fans of downtown Doug's Toronto casino plan. Premier, I want to know if you are, too.

Will the Premier finally show her cards on the new casino formula and come clean to Ontarians about how much she's anteing up to convince Toronto to host a downtown casino?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, let me be clear yet again. We are treating the entire province equally. We are not making a special deal for Toronto or any other region. We recognize the importance of the OLG. We all appreciate the transformational changes necessary to accommodate better value for these investments.

1130

We also know that there's a lot of money at stake to support hospitals and education and our social programs. So we will continue to do what's right for the people of Ontario, and we're not giving any special favours to any region.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Rural Ontario is being dealt a massive blow with the decision to cancel the Slots at Racetracks Program. Thousands of jobs are being lost



across the province due to the cancellation of this program—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Dufferin—Caledon, come to order.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:**—and thousands more will be lost in the near future.

Premier, this isn't penny pinochle in Grandma's parlour. Ontarians have a right to know if their government is playing a backroom deal for big stakes. Why is this Premier seriously—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is there any doubt that I have to mention that I could go again?

Please finish.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Why is this Premier seriously considering a hosting option favouring Toronto over all other communities?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The whole premise around the transformational change of the OLG is in fact to secure more jobs, support the industry and support those communities that are affected. What we want is to resolve and actually further the situation in those border towns that are being affected negatively at this point.

So I thought, and I would believe, that all members of the House would support the initiatives that we're doing to try to protect those communities and to ensure that people who are affected are better served. We will continue to do that, but no region is going to have a special deal, no region at all.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've got a question this morning for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. We're all aware in this House that this is Child and Youth Mental Health Week across the country. Today, almost one in five children suffer from a mental health illness. Approximately 70% of all mental health illnesses begin in childhood. We're all aware of the importance of providing our children and youth with the right supports when it comes to their mental health. In my own community of Oakville, this is a concern I hear often from my constituents.

Would the minister please tell us and the House what we are doing in this year's budget to ensure that the mental health specifically of Ontario's children and youth is being looked after?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Anybody going to answer that?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I am. I'm waiting. It's all right; go ahead.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I'd like to thank the member from Oakville for bringing up this very important issue today, especially this week. Later today I will be delivering a statement on how mental health issues affect our

families and communities, and also on how this government has made providing the right support a top priority.

I'm extremely proud that in this year's budget, funding for the Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy is increasing to \$93 million annually. This budget's investment is necessary to give young people the essential supports they need. The investment in this budget will help to deliver services when and where children and youth need them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the minister for that answer. I'm glad to hear this government has made a strong commitment in this budget to the mental health of children and youth in Ontario, because it's sorely needed.

I know that in my community of Oakville, front-line mental health services and programs that are available to young people can make a huge difference in their daily lives. Those services that are able to engage youth can make a big impact in the path that they decide to take and on the road to their recovery. Helping young people realize they're not alone can literally, in this case, mean the difference between life and death. The question is, what is the government doing to ensure that more front-line services will be available to all of Ontario's youth?

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Our government has made progress on our Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. In the last year, my ministry has made significant investments to ensure that all children and youth have timely access to front-line services. So 456 new mental health workers were placed in communities across the province to go along with 144 new mental health nurses in schools.

I have been to some of these centres that provide the services. I have talked to these workers. These services work and are needed in our schools. As well, my ministry is hiring 80 new aboriginal mental health and addiction workers for high-needs aboriginal communities.

Our investments will help over 35,000 young people across the province. We are proud of these achievements, and through this year's budget, we will continue to move forward.

#### LOW WATER LEVELS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment. Minister, I hope you're aware of the dire problems facing marinas and other small businesses in Georgian Bay. Because of declining water levels in the upper Great Lakes, marinas and other businesses have had to spend tens of millions of dollars of their own money dredging the bay in order to be open for this summer season.

Sturgeon Point Marina in Wasaga Beach, for example, has spent \$130,000 on dredging and has an annual additional business loss of \$20,000 because of the low water level.

Without the dredging, hundreds of people will be without work and the tourism industry will suffer.

Minister, with your responsibilities in economic development and employment, how will you assist these marinas and other small businesses?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** I want to thank the member opposite for the question. Obviously, this is an issue that's top of mind for all of us in the province.

As you're aware, the IJC has recently released a report with respect to the changing water levels and the challenges that we are facing. There are a number of factors causing this. There are obviously some effects that individuals and businesses are facing in the Georgian Bay area. I will tell you that this Friday I will be with the Premier and a number of other ministers at the FONOM conference. I know we'll be hearing first-hand about those particular challenges.

At the Ministry of Natural Resources, we're going to do everything we can to accelerate the dredging permits that are going to be requested, because we know that there's a finite period of time that this needs to be done in to ensure that these businesses can operate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary, the member from Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like the Minister of Economic Development to actually answer this because it's a job creation question.

Minister, the low water levels on Georgian Bay have become a natural disaster that could possibly impact thousands of tourism jobs. Marinas have had to spend millions of dollars, dollars that they do not have, just to open for this season.

Clearly, we have seen millions of dollars spent by your government on power plant closures and a dysfunctional regional tourism organization.

Georgian Bay marinas and other businesses need your help so these jobs can be saved.

The state of Michigan has a program, and the cheques are being sent out. When can Ontario marinas expect the same treatment as the marinas in Michigan?

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** Again, Speaker, I want to thank the members opposite for raising this very, very important issue. On this side of the House, we're also very concerned about the low water levels and the potential negative impact that it's having in our communities and with respect to our businesses and our industries.

The Minister of Tourism, I know, has spoken to me about this issue. The Minister of Municipal Affairs is also very concerned about this.

We are going to be in the area for the FONOM conference this week, and I'm happy to engage with those individuals bringing that to our attention.

I have had some conversation with individuals and organizations with respect to dredging and ensuring that they have the opportunity to get their tourist operations moving so that those businesses can put people to work. We are very concerned about that. We're going to do everything we can to ensure that process takes place

effectively and that those businesses can get the support that they need.

## TENANT PROTECTION

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Speaker, yesterday I met with constituents of Davenport who are paying the price for a gaping loophole in Ontario's rent control law. Like tens of thousands of other tenants across Ontario, these people live in rental units built after 1991, which means they are not covered by rent increase guidelines in the Residential Tenancies Act. As a result, these tenants face large and often arbitrary rent increases that are simply not affordable.

Will the minister commit to close this outdated loophole which exempts these rental units from rent control?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I really want to thank the member for the question. This is certainly an important issue, and our government has consistently shown a commitment to protecting tenants across Ontario.

The Residential Tenancies Act from 2006 provides tenants and landlords with strong, balanced protection, while fostering a robust rental housing market. Though rental buildings built or first occupied after November 1991 are exempt from most rent caps under the Residential Tenancies Act, these tenants are not without protection.

We understand how important stability in rental prices is for tenants. That's why the Residential Tenancies Act still only allows for one increase per year, requiring a 90-day written notice to tenants of all rental residences.

We also established the Landlord and Tenant Board that will act as an independent body that works with the authority to adjudicate disputes between landlords and tenants.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** With all due respect, that's not the issue. This loophole serves no purpose; it has to be closed. It's created a two-tier rental market in Ontario. It has left almost 60,000 Ontario tenant households vulnerable, with no rent control. Tenants in Ontario, including many people who rent condos, face uncertainty and financial hardship. So when will the minister acknowledge this unfairness and protect all tenants in Ontario from this loophole?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** Speaker, as I was saying, this Landlord and Tenant Board—a tenant can take the landlord to court, and certainly if the maintenance standards aren't being met or if the landlord needs to make repairs. We also eliminated automatic evictions, allowing all tenants who face eviction an opportunity to get a fair hearing, because we think that's important. We think it's important to balance protection of tenants with the encouragement of building new rental opportunities.

Certainly, we want to make sure that tenants have safe and affordable housing, and we know that the city of Toronto is preparing a report on this issue. We look forward to hearing ideas from the opposition as well as



other stakeholders about making residential tenancies affordable, and we want to work with them as well as the Residential Tenancies Act. We want to seek consultation of people who are affected by legislation that affects them in a negative way.

So I appreciate the question.

### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on a point of order.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I just want to take a moment to recognize Rosemary Sadlier from the Ontario Black History Society, who is in the west gallery here today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. We welcome our guest.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1141 to 1500.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I'd like to welcome the Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario, the MEAO, represented by Denise Magi, vice-president, Keith Deviney, president, and the other MEAO board of directors, who are here with us this afternoon.

I would also like to mention that they will be available this afternoon, after 4:15, in the members' lounge downstairs, and they invite absolutely everyone to come and meet with them.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Sorry?

**Interjection:** The dining room.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Sorry. I said the members' meeting room; I meant the members' dining room.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I appreciate the Attorney General heckling you to tell you the right room.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I always obey the voice of a gentleman with authority, Mr. Speaker, such as yourself or the Attorney General.

We certainly welcome all members there after 4:15 today. Thank you kindly.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Introduction of guests.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** We have three guests in the House today from Children's Mental Health Ontario: Christine Pelletier, Margo Warren and Sibel Cicek. I welcome them to the House this afternoon as I do the statement on Children's Mental Health Week.

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** It's also my pleasure to introduce many representatives from the myalgic encephalomyelitis, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities communities. They are here at Queen's Park to teach and educate us on those different diseases. I also encourage everybody to go down to the dining room at 4 o'clock, where they will be welcoming MPPs.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### BROCKVILLE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm proud today to recognize a remarkable milestone being celebrated this month in my riding where Brockville Collegiate Institute will mark its 125th anniversary.

I want to thank Alex Hodgkinson, a grade 12 student at BCI and a hard-working volunteer in my office, for her help with this statement.

Brockville Collegiate Institute, or BCI, has been providing students with a world-class education since its doors first opened in 1889. In the 125 years since, BCI graduates have gone on to be leaders in all walks of life.

I want to extend a warm welcome to Red Rams alumni, former teachers and support staff returning May 24 to 26 for a great celebration with today's students and staff.

Event co-chairs John Cristello and Cheryl Donovan, and their dedicated organizing committee, have planned a fantastic weekend of events celebrating what BCI has always been about—community.

Indeed, this has become a truly Brockville event as residents and the local business community have pitched in because they understand how much BCI means to our city.

I'm pleased that all funds raised at events will go to the BCI 125 Celebration Trust Fund to help students explore opportunities in academics, athletics and the arts.

Speaker, after 125 years, education in general and BCI in particular have seen many, many changes, but there's one constant in the halls at BCI: a commitment by staff and students to live up to their motto: "Excellence in Athletics, Arts and Academics."

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member might realize there's another BCI, in Brantford, that is almost as old. We share a commonality with BCI.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** And Belleville too.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Belleville and Brockville.

#### MOTHER'S DAY

**Miss Monique Taylor:** This past weekend, I hosted a Mother's Day tea in my riding of Hamilton Mountain. I was joined by women from all walks of life. The ethnic diversity in that room was inspiring. It was inspiring because mothers came together. We shared stories, wisdom, proud moments and unsure times. It was an opportunity for us to get together and celebrate what it truly means to be a mother.

We also discussed the trying times and the issues that we face. As women and as mothers we are faced by many challenges and barriers. I have met women who are working hard to achieve an education while raising a child and going to work. I have met with women who have been on the wait-list for child care for many months—years, some of them. I have met with women

who continue to face violence against women. I have met with women who are finding it very difficult to access supports for their children with disabilities.

But there is optimism, Mr. Speaker. By working together as women and as mothers, we can overcome these obstacles. In advance of Mother's Day this weekend, I would like to wish my mother, as well as all mothers across this province, a very happy Mother's Day.

### CONCOURS ACTIFS ET FIERs

**M. Phil McNeely:** Le 26 avril dernier j'ai assisté, en compagnie de ma collègue, la ministre de la francophonie, Madeleine Meilleur, à un événement tout à fait particulier à l'École élémentaire publique Jeanne-Sauvé d'Orléans : la course des corridors. Pour cette journée toute spéciale, chaque classe d'élèves a fait du jogging d'un bout à l'autre des corridors de l'école.

Cette activité est un prélude au projet Lève-toi et bouge, où les élèves et les parents pourront accumuler des cubes énergie à chaque 15 minutes d'activité physique réalisée entre le 29 avril et le 27 mai.

J'aimerais féliciter le directeur de l'école Jeanne-Sauvé, M. André Larouche, et son équipe pour avoir soumis un si beau projet au concours Actifs et fiers et pour avoir reçu la bannière de bronze.

J'aimerais aussi remercier les élèves et les parents présents pour leur accueil chaleureux. Quelle belle initiative de l'école Jeanne-Sauvé afin de promouvoir l'exercice et de trouver des façons originales de faire bouger nos jeunes. Ce sont des enfants débordant d'énergie que j'ai rencontrés vendredi dernier, et nous connaissons tous le lien étroit entre l'exercice et la bonne santé.

Les représentants du Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario—M<sup>me</sup> Édith Dumont, directrice; Stéphane Vachon; et Georges Orfali—étaient tous présents pour féliciter et encourager les élèves pour leur implication et leur participation à la course des corridors.

### ACTON TOWN HALL

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** It has always been worth the drive to Acton, but now there's yet another very good reason to visit that community. On Sunday afternoon, I joined MP Michael Chong and members of the Halton Hills town council at the official opening of Citizens' Hall at the Acton Town Hall Centre. Through a unique grassroots effort based on community spirit and partnership, the Acton town hall, built in the late 19th century, was saved from demolition and lovingly restored.

Located at the corner of Bower and Willow, the Acton Town Hall Centre has become a majestic addition to the province's stock of heritage properties. In this, the 21st century, it'll be used for all manner of community events—everything you could possibly imagine.

As the MPP for Wellington—Halton Hills, I want to express my thanks to all who were involved in this outstanding community project. I must begin with the

members of Heritage Acton, whose vision and dedication were the driving force behind the project. The Rotary Club of Acton has been a great supporter as well, along with the town of Halton Hills and many generous businesses and individuals.

In addition, the Trillium Foundation contributed \$150,000 to install an elevator, ensuring that the second floor will be accessible to all. We are very grateful for this grant, made possible through one of the province of Ontario's best programs, which I have always supported.

But Heritage Acton continues to raise money. I have supported them in their fundraising efforts and I wish them well as they continue in this important endeavour.

I would like to invite all members—indeed, everyone listening—to come to Wellington—Halton Hills and see what community spirit in action is all about.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member from Wellington—Halton Hills for his statement, as I said it without my toggle switch on, so I needed to put it on the record. So thank you for your statement.

### NURSES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Seeing this is Nursing Week, I'd like to take this time to recognize the hard-working and dedicated registered practical nurses in the province of Ontario.

#### 1510

In my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt, registered practical nurses make a difference in the lives of constituents every day. They work in our hospitals, long-term-care facilities and in our homes. Nurses are there when we need them most.

One of the RPNs who I'd like to recognize today is Kathleen Samuels. Kathleen has worked for a nursing agency in my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt for over 10 years. She works in a long-term-care setting and acute-care setting, and Kathleen is well respected by her peers and her patients.

As someone who has worked in the health care field as a front-line public health nurse, administrator, hospital policy-maker as well as a teacher, I have witnessed firsthand the need to employ RPNs in their full scope of practice. Doing so will allow Ontario hospitals to more effectively deal with the nursing home shortage facing our health care system and will also allow for the reduction in overtime and agency nurses.

RPNs visiting the Legislature today have been involved in effective care shifting that is assisting Ontario hospitals in maximizing their budgets.

I'd like to say thank you to all the RPNs in attendance today, as well as the over 40,000 RPNs across the province who are essential to the front-line delivery of quality health care in Ontario.

### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Today I am pleased to mark the 11th anniversary of Asian Heritage Month, a time for us



to reflect on our Asian history and relations here in Canada and around the world.

Right here in Ontario, Asian Canadians have shown leadership by opening businesses, creating good-paying jobs, taking on active roles in the community and sharing their rich culture through their traditions, arts and cuisine.

It's important that we recognize the contributions that Asian Canadians have made in our communities, both economically and culturally, which have helped us to develop a prosperous and diverse society.

I welcome all Ontarians to take part in Asian Heritage Month in their own communities. In fact, in my riding of Kitchener—Conestoga, the Waterloo Region Museum is hosting the Hmong exhibit, which shines light on the history of refugees from Vietnam, Thailand and China. These immigrants have made our region their home, contributing to a vibrant Ontario all of us enjoy.

This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Korean War and the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and the Republic of Korea. In honour of these two important milestones, Prime Minister Stephen Harper themed this year's Asian Heritage Month the Year of Korea in Canada.

With over 1.8 million Ontarians having Asian descent, we should use this month of May not only to reflect on their past achievements, but also to look ahead to the future as we continue to build and develop our great province together.

### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** On April 18, the Minister of Health stated that there would be some changes to the way physiotherapy would be funded in this province. As per the minister, the funds would go to local health integration networks and community care access centres across the province, rather than to the designated physiotherapy clinics.

We have not heard much since April 18, and a lot of people are wondering, what is the plan moving forward? The changes are said to be positive. The health care dollars would be better spent delivering patients in-home care. The new system will provide better value for money and access to services in more communities.

If this is the case, then why do we have people from across this province calling us because they are afraid that they're actually going to lose a service that they are depending on? I think it is partly because you have not shared the plan with the rest of the people of Ontario. They kind of have to trust you, and right now we're dealing with a little bit of a deficit in that department.

Our office is receiving calls from long-term-care facilities, people in retirement homes, patients, nurses and physiotherapists—they all want to know: Will you be able to guarantee access to the people who presently receive physiotherapy services so that the gains that they're making in mobility, in balance and in strength will continue to happen?

### MYALGIC ENCEPHALOMYELITIS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** The Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario, the MEAO, is a registered Ontario charity and a volunteer-operated organization which was founded in 1990. MEAO is a place of information, support, awareness and education for people living with myalgic encephalomyelitis—sometimes known as chronic fatigue syndrome—fibromyalgia and multiple chemical sensitivities. There are over 500,000 people in Ontario, as per the Community Health Survey of 2010, living with one or more of these chronic, debilitating and often disabling illnesses.

The symptoms of these illnesses often overlap and are very complicated. Patients with these illnesses often despair for lack of treatment options. Funding of these illnesses is almost non-existent, and the MEAO is actively advocating to help secure the funds needed for diagnosis, treatment, research and community support for all three illnesses.

May 12 is known as International Awareness Day for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, Fibromyalgia and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. Today, on May 7, 2013, MEAO is having an awareness event here at Queen's Park once again, and it advocates on behalf of all Ontarians who have more than one or just one of these illnesses. We will see each of you members, we hope, in the members' dining room from 4:15 p.m. today. Thank you kindly.

### WASAGA BEACH LIONS AND LIONESS CLUBS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I'm pleased to rise in the House today to recognize the Wasaga Beach Lions and Lioness Clubs on the 50th and 35th anniversaries of their respective charters. For both of these organizations, service to the community began decades ago and has only grown since.

In 1963, Reverend Donald French formed a group of businessmen as a means to increase church membership. From there, the Wasaga-Oakview Lions Club was born. Since its inception, it has contributed more than \$2 million to our community and international causes worldwide.

Following that, in 1978, Sid Taylor, the then-president of the Lions Club, sponsored a club for wives of Lions members that was termed "Lionettes" but has since been renamed the Wasaga Beach Lioness Club. Together, these organizations have contributed significantly to the betterment of every aspect of our community and play an important part in our region's history.

One of their first donations was an ambulance to the town of Wasaga Beach. They funded the construction of our local Wasaga Stars Arena. They contributed to the development of our library, to our local RecPlex, to parks and bus shelters, and also to the Small Fry club, which preceded kindergarten in the province of Ontario.

True to their slogan, they "Have Fun while Helping Others," and without question, they have left an indelible

mark on our community, with a lasting effect for generations to come. As MPP for Simcoe–Grey, I could not be more proud of the membership of our local Lions and Lioness Clubs, and I would like to thank them for their tremendous contributions to our community.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### UNLAWFULLY POSSESSED HANDGUNS IN VEHICLES ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 SUR LES ARMES DE POING ILLÉGALES DANS LES VÉHICULES

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 66, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Civil Remedies Act, 2001 to promote public safety and suppress conditions leading to crime by prohibiting driving on the highway in a motor vehicle in which there is an unlawfully possessed handgun / Projet de loi 66, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi de 2001 sur les recours civils afin de promouvoir la sécurité publique et d'éliminer les conditions engendrant le crime en interdisant la conduite sur la voie publique d'un véhicule automobile dans lequel se trouve une arme de poing dont la possession est illégale.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Mr. Speaker, as you know, there is a constant flood of smuggled handguns into Ontario that is endangering the lives of regular citizens and our front-line police officers because these gunmen find it too easy to ride around city streets with unlawful guns in their cars. It's about time we did something about it.

1520

### WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT (POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER), 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SÉCURITÉ PROFESSIONNELLE ET L'ASSURANCE CONTRE LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL (TROUBLE DE STRESS POST-TRAUMATIQUE)

Ms. DiNovo moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 67, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder / Projet de loi 67, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les

accidents du travail relativement au trouble de stress post-traumatique.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** This will be the fourth time for this bill. It says that the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, is amended to create a rebuttable presumption relating to post-traumatic stress disorder affecting emergency response workers. Subsection 15.3(1) defines "emergency response worker" to mean a firefighter, paramedic or police officer. Subsection 15.3 states that if an emergency response worker suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, the disorder is presumed to be an occupational disease that occurred due to the employment as an emergency response worker unless the contrary is shown. The bill sets up procedural and transitional rules governing claims to which a presumption applies.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** I rise in the House today in recognition of Children's Mental Health Week in Ontario, being observed this week. This is an opportunity each year to increase the awareness of mental health and its signs and to decrease the stigma associated with mental illness. It's also a time to increase our understanding of the help that is available for those with mental health issues and their families.

I can tell you from personal experience that parenting is both rewarding and challenging. I have met parents who are raising children with mental health issues, and I've learned about the hurdles that they have to overcome every day for things that other parents may take for granted, so I absolutely commend all those mothers and fathers for all that they do for their children.

There was a time when the topic of mental health was not only considered taboo, but the help and support needed either did not exist or was not accessible. Individuals and families affected by mental health issues suffered alone and in silence.

Today, because of broad efforts by community members, organizations and governments, we are becoming increasingly more aware of mental health issues. I'd like to take a moment to recognize our partners from Children's Mental Health Ontario, who are with us here today. We welcome you to the Legislature. Thank you for providing us with the green ribbons that members are wearing to commemorate Children's Mental Health Week.

It is through the work of individuals and agencies like Children's Mental Health Ontario that many more people



are talking more openly about mental health. And we need to continue to talk, as families, as friends, as colleagues in our communities, because not only will that fight the stigma associated with mental illness, it will help us find solutions for children and youth living with mental health issues and their families.

We need to talk about it because every young person in this province with mental health issues deserves the support and every opportunity we can provide to help them reach their full potential. That's why I'm proud to be part of a government that introduced and continues to move forward with Ontario's comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy. In developing and implementing this strategy, we continue to work across government and with all our partners—including the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care, Education, and Training, Colleges and Universities—to create a system that delivers what young people need, when they need it, as close to home as possible. Our goal is simple: To create a more co-ordinated and responsive child and youth mental health system across the province.

Our strategy focuses on children and youth first because we know that one in five young people in Ontario today is dealing with mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and eating disorders. We also know that 70% of mental health and addiction problems begin in childhood and adolescence. Early identification and intervention is key. It can put children and youth back on track, leading to better outcomes and improved school achievement.

That is why our government continues to strengthen our investments in child and youth mental health. New investments that began in 2011 will grow to \$93 million annually at full implementation.

Our strategy is working. Already, approximately 35,000 more children and youth and their families are benefiting from quicker and easier access to mental health services and supports. These are being provided through over 770 new mental health workers in schools, communities and youth courts across the province.

Speaker, an unfortunate outcome of mental illness is sometimes suicide. That's why our government is also focused on prevention and has engaged in dialogue with experts and those with lived experience of attempted suicide. Youth suicide prevention strategies are now integrated in community resources and training.

As we implement the strategy, we continue to work with our aboriginal partners and communities to provide culturally appropriate mental health services so aboriginal children and youth can reach their full potential. Our new investments include funding for more than 80 new aboriginal mental health and addiction workers in high-needs communities, which are expected to provide additional services to 4,000 more aboriginal children and youth each year.

We've come a long way in reducing the stigma related to mental illness and in supporting children, youth, and their families. We need to continue to work together with all our partners—those affected by mental illness and

their families; agencies, organizations, clinicians and different levels of government—to keep the momentum going.

I want to thank all those who work with and on behalf of children and youth with mental health issues. Your compassion, your strength and your dedication are a powerful contribution to the children, youth and families you serve and the communities you live in. Thank you for your daily commitment, for caring, and for being part of the solution.

## NURSING WEEK

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It is with great pleasure that I rise during National Nursing Week to acknowledge the enormous contributions of nurses to the health of the people of Ontario, and to thank them for that contribution. Without a doubt, Ontario's health care system, of which we are so proud, simply wouldn't provide the high quality of care that patients rely on if not for our nurses.

Nurses in Ontario work collaboratively each day using the best evidence available to guide their work. They work hard to improve the quality of patient care and focus on ways to improve the patient experience and patient outcomes.

For the last nine-plus years, this government's commitment to Ontario nurses has been inspired by the same consistent commitment that nurses have shown and continue to show for their patients. Almost as soon as we took office, we began working to change the culture in health care.

Nurses are front-line partners in health care, and that's why we're committed to invest in them throughout their career. One of the ways we've accomplished this is through the Nursing Graduate Guarantee, which we launched in 2007. Since then, more than 14,300 nursing graduates have been connected with full-time nursing opportunities through that program.

Until now, the Nursing Graduate Guarantee has been available only to nurses who graduated here in Ontario. But yesterday, I was delighted to announce that we're expanding the Nursing Graduate Guarantee initiative to allow nursing graduates educated elsewhere in Canada to participate. The expansion will support Canadian nursing graduates who choose Ontario as their preferred place of employment.

### 1530

In addition, we're creating a new initiative within the Nursing Graduate Guarantee to provide internationally educated nurses with support to transition to practise in Ontario's health care system. That program is called the Nursing Career OriEntation initiative and it will provide up to six months of funding to health care organizations to hire internationally educated nurses to participate in a hands-on orientation program. This program will help those internationally educated nurses who qualify to practise in Ontario to integrate more easily into our health care settings.

There's more we can do to improve primary care delivery across the province and optimize the role of nurses within primary care. My ministry will be partnering with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario and the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario to provide funding to develop and disseminate two new initiatives.

First, we're investing \$100,000 for the online optimization of the Nursing Workforce in Primary Care Toolkit. This education suite will help employers to ensure that they're using to the fullest extent possible the skills and knowledge of their RNs and RPNs to provide primary care services.

Second, we're making a \$100,000 investment for a Primary Care Nurse Education Fund for both RNs and RPNs to participate in primary care learning programs. This initiative will help nurses increase their knowledge and skills in primary care nursing so they can provide the best-possible care to the people of Ontario.

My deepest appreciation goes to the RNAO and RPNAO for their partnership and collaboration in making these two new programs possible for their members. These are just the latest investments we've made to support our nurses and allow them to practise to the full extent of their scope. I cannot think of a better theme for this year's Nursing Week: Nursing, A Leading Force for Change.

We are working in partnership with nurses to bring about necessary and positive change in our health care system. Just last month, the Premier committed to help nurses deliver more services that will improve the care of their patients. Our government will work with the College of Nurses of Ontario to expand the scope of practice for registered nurses and registered practical nurses so they can dispense medication in specific circumstances; for example, when patients do not have quick access to a pharmacy.

We're also working with the nursing community to identify additional opportunities to expand their scope of practice. Potential changes could include allowing registered nurses to prescribe certain medications and nurse practitioners to prescribe controlled substances.

Expanding nursing scope of practice helps to provide patients with access to the right care at the right time and in the right place. That's the focus of our action plan for health care. Nurses can see first-hand better than anyone the need for transformation in our health care system. That's why Ontario's budget builds on our government's commitment to shift care into the community and into people's homes, in particular for seniors and people with complex conditions. We know that more care at home and in our community will make a real difference in people's lives.

For example, we're investing an additional \$260 million this year into the community care sector. That includes home care for 46,000 more people, most of them seniors. Our investment will allow us to set a five-day home care wait time target for complex patients, starting from their community care access centre assessment.

This will clearly mean a bigger role for RNs, RPNs and NPs.

Our government is committed to ensuring Ontario is the healthiest place to grow up and grow old. We've come a long way in making real, long-lasting changes to our health care system, but we still have work to do. It's a source of real comfort to me as health minister that I can always count on the nurses of this province to do their part.

As well as acknowledging National Nursing Week, I'd like to note that this coming Sunday is International Nurses Day. On Sunday, I hope every one of my friends here in the chamber will spare a quick thought for the wonderful contribution of nurses all over the world and say a sincere thank you. I know I will.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It is now time for responses. The member from Barrie.

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

**Mr. Rod Jackson:** This week is child and youth mental health week. It's an honour to speak here today on the importance of bringing awareness to mental health, which is one of the most pressing issues faced by our children and youth today.

For too long, mental health has been treated as an afterthought in our health system, despite the fact that 10% to 20%, or 1.2 million children and youth, are affected by mental illness or disorder. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among young people, a scary fact. The total number of 12-to-19-year-olds in Canada at risk for developing depression is a staggering 3.2 million. The need for support and services to ensure good mental health is growing, as mental health problems are predicted to increase and become one of the five most common causes of morbidity, mortality and disability among young children.

It doesn't have to be this way. It's estimated that 70% of childhood mental health issues can be solved with early intervention and therapy, yet to receive treatment, children and youth face an average wait time of six to eight months, and only one in five children who need mental health services ever actually receive them—and those are just the ones that we know of.

Our children and youth, the future of Ontario, deserve much better. Mental health is an essential part of overall health. Like good physical health, good mental health enables children and youth to lead happy lives and grow up to be happy, healthy, productive adults. Mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness; it is a state of well-being. This is something every parent wants for their children, and something that every child and youth in our country deserves.

The PC Party of Ontario recognizes the importance of children and youth having good mental health, and has pledged to make mental health a priority. This month, actually, I am proud to have MPP Christine Elliott, our deputy leader and health and long-term-care critic, come



to Barrie to host a round table with mental health service providers in my community.

I'd also like to mention quickly Terry Fox school in Barrie, which is just down the road from my house. It is holding a mental health awareness walk today. These students and staff should be commended for recognizing that child and youth mental health is such an important issue, and I commend them on their efforts in this regard.

#### NURSING WEEK

**Mr. Bill Walker:** On behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, it is with great pleasure that I rise during international Nursing Week to acknowledge the great contributions nurses make every day to our health care system and to thank them for their invaluable knowledge, skills and compassion.

Nurses are often the first line of patient contact. They are the backbone of our system, and Ontario proudly has some of the best nurses in the world. So it is a fact beyond any doubt that our health care system would not be as respected and as strong if it wasn't for every one of the 150,000-plus registered nurses, registered practical nurses, nurse practitioners and PSWs that work in our communities and care for our loved ones.

Nursing Week is also a time to celebrate the Ontario Nurses' Association's 40th anniversary. ONA represents 60,000 registered nurses and allied health professionals, as well as more than 14,000 nursing student affiliates providing care in hospitals, long-term facilities, public health community clinics and industry.

Yet I'm a little concerned that we're praising nurses at the same time that the Liberal government is cutting nursing jobs. ONA members are gravely concerned about the impact on patient care following an announcement of an additional 25 full-time-equivalent RN cuts at the Ottawa Hospital. In January, as many as 90 nursing jobs were cut, representing a loss of almost 200,000 hours per year of nursing care at that hospital. Most recently, 15 registered nurses in Sarnia and 20 registered practical nurses in North Bay received layoff notices. Statistics compiled by the College of Nurses of Ontario confirm this fact: The number of registered nurses fell by about 1,000 between 2010 and 2012. Ontario has nearly the lowest number of working registered nurses per capita of any province or territory in Canada.

This week, as many of us prepare to visit and witness first-hand the role of nurses in our ridings as part of the annual Take Your MPP to Work day, let's remember that a viable health care system requires a diverse health care team of nurses. I hope that every one of us in this chamber will find our own way to recognize the contributions of nurses all over the world and say a sincere thank you.

I know from my own personal experience with the health care system, as executive director of a hospital foundation, as a father and also as a son, that nurses are vital to Ontario's health care system. For all that

excellent work they do for our loved ones each and every day, I thank you. Happy international Nursing Week.

That includes the very hard-working Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock MPP, Laurie Scott, and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Madeleine Meilleur, the only two nurses in this Legislature, to my knowledge.

**Interjection:** Soo Wong.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I can add Soo Wong as well. Thank you.

**Interjection:** And France Gélinas.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** And France Gélinas.

**Interjection:**

**Mr. Bill Walker:** No? Speaker, we'll retract that last one, if I could. Thank you, Speaker. Thanks for your help, caucus.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** If the member didn't have the time, I wouldn't let him.

1540

#### CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm proud to stand with Ontarians in celebrating Children's Mental Health Week. As the statistics show, we have about 500,000 children and youth who have mental health problems. ASD, autism spectrum disorder, affects one in 88 people. About 6% of our children have anxiety disorders serious enough to need treatment. ADHD affects 5% of children. These are just some of the many mental health disorders that are affecting today's children and youth.

These disorders can be caused by chemical imbalances, exposures to toxins, or hereditary influences, but they can also come from low self-esteem, poor performance at school, or stress at work.

This information and much more can be made available by the children's mental health folks here in Ontario, and I really urge the members to contact the 85 agencies across Ontario to speak about these.

These community-based agencies are the backbone of Ontario's mental health system for children and youth. They provide excellent care and treatment for our young people. These agencies are staffed by many dedicated professionals and volunteers, who do amazing work for our children and youth.

Unfortunately, I must echo what I said at this time last year: the fact that there is little uniformity in the delivery of services and treatments across Ontario. Their strong community-based focus has meant a lack of mandated programs and regulation of the sector. This means that not every agency is able to provide the same level of care or training. They cannot ensure the same treatment and coordination of services.

In 2005, the government stated that the primary goal was for a child and youth mental health sector that is coordinated, collaborative and integrated at all community and governmental levels. Eight years later, this still hasn't become a reality.

I know that Children's Mental Health Ontario is keen to work with government to reform the system.

Successive budgets have promised hundreds of millions in funding, but the previous two decades were marked by chronic underfunding that has taken a toll on the system.

I know I'm going to fall short, Mr. Speaker. I could go on for quite a long time about this industry and the great work that they're doing, but I do have to share my time with the member from Nickel Belt.

### NURSING WEEK

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to say a few words about Nursing Week, la Semaine des soins infirmiers.

I want to start by thanking the registered practical nurses who were at Queen's Park today with SEIU and treated us to lunch. That was very nice of them, and a nice way to celebrate Nursing Week.

Of course, I say thank you to all of the other nurses, whether you'd be a nurse practitioner or a registered nurse. Thank you for the profession you have chosen. Thank you for the care you give us.

As you all know, nurses can work in every part of our health care system, be it in hospital, long-term-care homes, primary care health units—they're everywhere. But they're also outside of the health care system. They work in our jails and they work in our penitentiaries. Last year, for National Nursing Week, I went to visit—my second tour of duty—the Sudbury Jail. What I saw really shocked me. On both my visits, the 184 beds were full of inmates. About two thirds of them were of aboriginal descent, which means that the rate of diabetes was through the roof.

I would say that I knew about half of the inmates, mainly because I used to work at a community health centre that offered mental health services, and those people had accessed the mental health services that we had. But they were now in jail.

I also saw the great work that Tammy, Tracy, Suzanne and Trevor were doing. Those are the four full-time nurses who work at the Sudbury Jail. Their caseloads were really heavy, and their support—well, non-existent. Even the examination table, the room, the medical instruments—everything was old and decrepit.

Speaker, I've never heard a judge sentence somebody to amputation or blindness, but when a nurse doesn't have time to dispense insulin, this is really what we're doing.

When a nurse is running off her feet, she doesn't have time to do the mental health treatments that have been prescribed to about half of the inmates who suffer with mental illness. And then we know the drastic consequences of mental illness when it is not treated.

I want to say a special thank you to all of the nurses who do the great work in the jails in Sudbury and elsewhere in the province. Tammy, Tracy, Suzanne and Trevor, thank you for your great work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the members for their statements.

It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a pleasure to read a petition from my riding of Durham. It reads as follows—and I'll be quick, because there are other people who want to participate.

"Whereas industrial wind turbine developments have raised concerns among citizens over health, safety and property values; and

"Whereas the" failed "Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approvals;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments and that a moratorium on wind development be declared until an independent, epidemiological study is completed into the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines" in development.

I'm pleased to sign and support it and send it to the floor with Victoria, one of the pages.

### LONG-TERM CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from all over Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas there are a growing number of reported cases of abuse, neglect and substandard care for our seniors in long-term-care homes; and

"Whereas people with complaints have limited options, and frequently don't complain because they fear repercussions, which suggests too many seniors are being left in vulnerable situations without independent oversight; and

"Whereas Ontario is one of only two provinces in Canada where the Ombudsman does not have independent oversight of long-term-care homes. We need accountability, transparency and consistency in our long-term-care home system;"

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to expand the Ombudsman's" oversight "to include Ontario's long-term-care homes in order to protect our most vulnerable seniors."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Megan, from Sudbury, to deliver it to the Clerk.

### ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Agincourt is historically recognized as north Scarborough's oldest and most well-established community; and



"Whereas the residents of the community of Scarborough–Agincourt share unique interests; and

"Whereas historically Agincourt's electoral voice has always been found in an electoral district north of Ontario Highway 401; and

"Whereas communities, such as Scarborough–Agincourt, with historical significance should be protected and not divided; and

"Whereas the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario has recently released proposals to redraw the federal riding map of Scarborough–Agincourt; and

"Whereas 'community of interest' is a mandated consideration of the federal Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act; and

"Whereas the original proposal from the commission included a unified Scarborough–Agincourt riding; and

"Whereas the commission's report would inexplicably divide the Scarborough–Agincourt community; and

"Whereas the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt should not be divided and the electoral riding should remain, in its entirety, with its north Scarborough neighbours;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To call upon the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission for Ontario to recognize the historical and demographic context of the Scarborough–Agincourt community and to preserve riding boundaries that include a protected Scarborough–Agincourt community north of Ontario Highway 401."

I fully support it and give it to page Ethan.

### AIR QUALITY

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean program was implemented as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and vehicle emissions have declined significantly from 1998 to 2010; and

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions were, in fact, the result of factors other than the Drive Clean program, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

"Whereas from 1999 to 2010 the percentage of vehicles that failed emissions testing under the Drive Clean program steadily declined from 16% to 5%; and

"Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computerized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment must take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program."

I affix my name to this petition, because I support it, and give it to page Simon.

### HYDRO RATES

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for northern families;

1550

"Whereas the government has a duty and an obligation to ensure that essential goods and services are affordable for all families living in the north and across the province;

"Whereas government policy such as the Green Energy Act, the harmonized sales tax, cancellation of gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga have caused the price of electricity to artificially increase to the point it is no longer affordable for families or small business;

"Whereas electricity generated and used in northwestern Ontario is among the cleanest and cheapest to produce in Canada, yet has been inflated by government policy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the price of electricity in the northwest and ensure that residents and businesses have access to energy that properly reflects the price of local generation."

I support this and give this to page Jack to deliver.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Rouge Valley, Ajax and Pickering hospital campus was expanded and opened one and a half years ago, with the largest expansion in our community's history; and

"Whereas the new growth in this area creates added pressures to the system; and

"Whereas the rapid changes in modern technology create the need for infrastructure upgrades;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, sign this petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and ask that the government of Ontario continue to invest in our Ajax-Pickering community hospital by adding additional services on an ongoing basis so our residents can continue to receive the best care in this province."

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I will pass it—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank Stephen Kirkwood and the members of the Leeds and Grenville Landowners Association for providing me with this petition. It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario government admits power prices will increase an additional 46% by 2015; and

"Whereas a recent study found the Liberal government's renewable energy subsidy program is adding \$5.2 billion in costs to Ontarians on their tax and hydro bills, while the political decision to cancel the Mississauga and Oakville gas plants on the eve of the 2011 provincial election will further drive up rates; and

"Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, particularly in rural Ontario, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

"Whereas home heating and electricity are essential utilities for families in rural Ontario:

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to bring an end to the current government's scandalous mismanagement of Ontario's energy sector by enacting policies that will put the province's consumers, farmers and employers ahead of special interests."

I'm pleased to affix my signature with this wonderful pen and—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Petitions?

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas St. Joseph's Health Care centre has decided to close its less than 15 year old community hydrotherapy pool on June 28/13. Hundreds of people in pain will be denied this imperative therapy which has been specifically ordered by their physicians and physiotherapists. There is no other affordable pool in the area with three depth levels, salt water at least 92 degrees F with excellent accessibility and hydrotherapy leadership. This decision is in opposition to the statements of the health minister to increase health dollars in the community for physiotherapy and for seniors. Pool patrons' requests to work with St. Joseph's to continue this program have been ignored. The sacrificial work of fundraising to build the pool is being ignored.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We ask you to direct St. Joseph's Health Care centre to continue its hydrotherapy program in this excellent, appropriate pool. This decision will save huge amounts of health dollars both now and in the future."

I sign the petition and give it to page Brigid.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** This comes from my riding of Prince Edward-Hastings.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Health Insurance Program ... previously covered one ... Pap test a year for women in the province of Ontario; and

"Whereas the Canadian Cancer Society estimated that 1,350 Canadian women were diagnosed with cervical cancer and 390 died from the disease in 2012, and that

this valuable test is a simple screening procedure that can help prevent cancer of the cervix; and

"Whereas the province through OHIP now only covers the cost of a test once every three years under new rules that took effect January 1; and

"Whereas women who want an annual Pap test now have to pay for the screening themselves under the new rules;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately return the OHIP funding for annual Pap tests for women in order to help prevent cervix cancer and ensure women's overall health and well-being."

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** This is a petition—one of hundreds of signatures that I've already delivered—another one here:

"Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for several years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with developmental and other related disabilities; and

"Whereas because this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs, developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

"Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

"Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies being forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

"Whereas in some cases services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a 'custodial' care arrangement; and

"Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

"Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential supports, day program supports and other programs province-wide;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have in effect been cut;

"(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;



“(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce;

“(4) To provide adequate new funding to agencies to ensure that the growing number of families on wait lists have access to accommodation supports and day supports and services.”

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to affix my—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you.

The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

## WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition from my riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Auditor General confirmed that no comprehensive evaluation was completed by the McGuinty”-Wynne “government on the impact of the billion-dollar commitment of renewable energy on such things as net job losses and future energy prices, which will increase another 46% over the next five years; and

“Whereas poor decisions by the McGuinty government, such as the Green Energy Act, where Ontario pays up to 80 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity it doesn't need and then must pay our neighbours to take it for free, and the billion-dollar cost of the seat-saving cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas power plants, have contributed to making the cost of Ontario power the highest in North America; and

“Whereas there has been no third party study to look at the health, physical, social, economic and environmental impacts of wind turbines; and

“Whereas Ontario's largest farm organizations, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, have called for a suspension of industrial wind turbine development until the serious shortcomings can be addressed; and

“Whereas the McGuinty”-Wynne “government has removed all decision-making powers from the local municipal governments when it comes to the location and size of industrial wind and solar farms;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Liberal government support Huron–Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson's private member's motion which calls for a moratorium on all industrial wind turbine development until a third party health and environmental study has been completed.”

I agree with this petition and will be passing it off to page Karinna.

## WIND TURBINES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Sprott Power, also known as Zero Emission People, Energy Farming Ontario Inc., and Wind Works, are proposing to construct 10 wind turbines, known as Settler's Landing and/or Snowy Ridge Wind Parks within

the city of Kawartha Lakes in order to produce up to 20 megawatts of power; and

“Whereas the proposed wind parks are to be located, in whole or in part, on the Oak Ridges moraine; and  
**1600**

“Whereas the location of the proposed wind parks will adversely affect wildlife populations, wildlife migration patterns, human health, and the natural environment; and

“Whereas the proposed wind parks will also reduce property values and the quality of life in the surrounding communities;

“Now therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“The government of Ontario live up to its throne speech commitment, and deny these applications in recognition of this not being a willing community for industrial wind turbines; and

“That the government announce an immediate moratorium on the further development of industrial wind turbines until complete studies have been completed into all direct and indirect health impacts associated with these projects.”

It's signed by many people in Kawartha Lakes. I'll hand it over to page Brigid.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The time for petitions has ended.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PROSPEROUS AND FAIR ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2013

### LOI DE 2013 POUR UN ONTARIO PROSPÈRE ET ÉQUITABLE (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Mr. Gerretsen, on behalf of Mr. Sousa, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 65, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 65, Loi visant à mettre en œuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I will be sharing my time with the member of Vaughan. He's one of the newest members in the House, the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance. He's hard-working, dedicated, extremely competent, and he will give you a very good outline of what's in the budget.

However, before turning it over to him, I would just tell the people of Ontario that if they're interested in obtaining a copy of the budget, all they have to do is go online to [www.ServiceOntario.ca/publications](http://www.ServiceOntario.ca/publications). They can get the entire budget online. They can also order it through ServiceOntario.ca, or they can go to one of the ServiceOntario contact centres during normal business hours to get a copy of the budget, Speaker.

I will be reading from the budget. I know there are an awful lot of talking points that the members of the opposition have—maybe even some of our own government members—but I always believe in sticking to the actual text.

Speaker, let me tell you, I've been here for 18 years, and if any budget cries out for support from all sides of the House, from the Conservatives over there and from our friends in the New Democratic Party over there, this is a budget that does that. This is a budget that talks about a prosperous and fair Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I know there's a lot of heckling, Speaker, but this budget really does something for all of the people of Ontario. Let me just review some of the highlights in the budget. I refer, first of all, to page 3 of the budget.

**Interjection:** How much did that cost?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** No, it didn't cost anything. It notes in a very affirmative fashion that of all those jobs that we lost in the recession of 2008-09, some 400,000 jobs have been gained back as a result of the policies of this government. Now let me make it clear: The government did not create these jobs, but we put in place policies that allowed those jobs to be created in the private sector. We have gained back everything that was lost during that horrible period of time.

I could tell you all sorts of other things, but let me just outline a couple of very positive measures in this budget. First of all, we've got a \$100-million fund to help those smaller municipalities who have major infrastructure issues and problems so that they can be helped to repair those roads, those bridges and all of the other municipal works that are absolutely necessary. That is good for everyone.

Transit: We all know the tremendous transit and traffic problems we have here in the GTA. My golly, I experience it every time I drive into Toronto and drive back home again to Kingston, Ontario. I have made that trip, in 18 years, over 750 times. We know there are major problems here, so what have we done? Over the next 10 years, GO Transit is going to be expanded so that there won't be as many people having to come in by car from Whitby, from Hamilton, from all over the place.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** They will be able to go by GO Transit. Even the Conservative finance critic is applauding that measure, and thank you very much for your support in this.

Let me talk about something that the Conservatives are really interested in, that we've included in the budget. Listen to this: that we are supporting Ontario manufacturers by extending the accelerated capital cost allowance for manufacturing and processing machinery and equipment, providing \$265 million in tax savings over three years. That is good for business. It's good for the job opportunities it will create. It's good for the province of Ontario. The more jobs there are in the province of Ontario, the more prosperous we are, the better we all do.

Speaker, I want to talk about some of the other highlights in the budget as well. First of all, let me just talk about something that I feel very, very—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** We listened to your opposition leader, you listened to our Premier, and undoubtedly you listened to the leader of the third party. Why don't you listen to what other members have to say at this point in time?

On page 69, something that I feel very strongly about: I think one of the major problems that we face in this society is the ever-growing difference between the haves and the have-nots in our society. That is a major, major problem. The difference between the people at the bottom end of the economic scale and the ones at the top over the last 15 to 20 years has expanded tremendously. That is not good for our society, and it certainly isn't good for the people who are at the bottom end of the economic scale.

What are we doing? We are starting to implement the Frances Lankin and Munir Sheikh report by providing the people at the bottom end of the economic scale some added relief. Let me just talk to you a little bit about that. We're saying, for example, that of the first \$200 per month that is earned by the people who are getting Ontario Works, they will be exempted. In other words, there won't be a clawback of that. The first \$200 that they earn will not be clawed back against any support payments that they get.

Secondly, we're also increasing the social assistance rates, including the top-up for single adults without children receiving Ontario Works. We all know that's needed. No one can live on \$660 or \$700 or \$750 per month, and if you think you can, why don't you try it for a while? I know I couldn't, and I'm sure there's no member in this House who could do that. We also increased the Ontario Works liquid asset limits to help recipients save and become more financially secure. That is good.

It's only a start. Much more work needs to be done, but it's heading in the right direction, and I know that we've got the confirmation of both Frances Lankin and Munir Sheikh to thank for their report, and they agree with this particular approach.

Let me just deal with another highlight that can be obtained on page 103. I believe in total fiscal responsibility. There's no question about that. I don't think that governments can continue to provide the necessary services in health care and education to the people of Ontario if we continue to run budgetary deficits. We cannot borrow from future generations. I totally agree with that. But we also know that at times it may be necessary, particularly when we've gone through the kind of depression that we went through in 2008 and 2009. One of the most startling aspects of this budget is the fact that last year we projected a deficit of some \$14.8 billion. We were able, through good, sound management, to limit that this past year to \$9.8 billion. It's not the end result, but it's a darned good start. And, by the way, we are going to



have a balanced budget in the year 2017, which is exactly the same thing that the other two parties promised as well.

Finally—and the Minister of Health has already talked about this today, and I will be turning it over to the parliamentary assistant in a moment—one of the real good-news items in this budget is the fact that over the next three years, we, through our common tax dollars that we all pay into—it's never the government's money; it's always the people's money—are going to contribute another \$700 million over the next three years for improved home care services so that people can stay in their own homes longer. People don't want to go—elderly people—to long-term-care homes; they want to stay in their own home environment as much as possible. Some people can't do it right now because the services may not be available to the same extent as we want them to. But the fact that we're contributing another \$700 million to the home care programs in this province through the community care access centres is a good thing for people. It will allow them to stay in their own home.

1610

Speaker, once again, if ever a budget, in all of the years that I've been here—and I say this particularly to my good friends in the New Democratic Party. If ever a budget cried out for unanimous support in this Legislative Assembly, this is it. Vote for the budget. Do the right thing. Don't do all the political calculations. Vote for a budget that will truly help the majority of the people of the province of Ontario.

Now I'll turn it over to the parliamentary assistant.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Vaughan.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I want to begin by thanking the Attorney General for his very passionate remarks, for his kind words—in this case, his kind words about me. I want to thank him in particular for making sure that there's a lot of energy in this chamber before I have the opportunity to stand up and deliver some of my own remarks with respect to Bill 65, a bill that I think is very appropriately named the Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act.

As the Attorney General explained in his opening comments, I am very proud to serve as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance. That's a role that I've enjoyed taking on over the last number of months. It's a role that I started out serving in when the former member from Windsor, the former Minister of Finance, was in that role. It's a role that I've continued to enjoy serving in and I'm very proud to serve in alongside my colleague the member for Mississauga South, our current Minister of Finance, who stood in this House last week and delivered an eloquent and articulate budget speech outlining exactly how our government intends to continue moving our province forward over the next number of months and years.

Before I delve into some of the specifics around the bill itself, I would like to spend a couple of minutes—because, as many in this chamber will imagine, putting

together a budget, particularly a budget that's so effective, is a mammoth task. There are a number of individuals who I believe deserve a mention, both in my remarks and the thanks of people in this chamber and the thanks, frankly, of people across Ontario.

Of course, as in every minister's office, as in every MPP's office, there are a number of staff who have worked extremely hard over the last number of months—political staff, that is—on this particular budget, on this document, on this blueprint for moving Ontario forward. There are a number of very talented women and men who work at the Ministry of Finance, from the deputy minister on down, who have done extraordinary work in pulling this together, as they have in many, many years past.

I want to mention, of course, every member of our caucus on the government side who had the opportunity to provide input over a number of weeks; many members on this side of the House who led and participated in virtual town halls and in their own pre-budget consultations in their respective ridings, certainly the members of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, chaired by the member from Oakville and populated by members like my seatmate, the member from Scarborough–Agincourt; the member from Thornhill; the member from Beaches–East York; and others.

The work that the members of that committee did in listening to consultations and listening to submissions from Ontarians right around the province is certainly something that helped inform this process. I believe the members of that particular committee deserve the thanks of this chamber.

Of course, as was mentioned by the Minister of Finance last week, the more than 600,000 Ontarians who had the opportunity, through all of these consultations, both in-person and in virtual consultations, to feed into this process to make sure that we were able to develop and put out, put forward and propose a budget that speaks to the aspirations of this province—I will say again that I believe this particular budget, Bill 65, definitely does speak to the ambitions and the hopes of the people of Ontario.

Before I go a little bit further into the details of the budget, I do want to talk a little bit about the context. I've only been in this chamber as an MPP for the last eight months, but I had the opportunity a number of years ago to serve in this building as a staff person for a couple of different elected officials. When I was contemplating what I wanted to say today—what I wanted to talk about in these remarks—I gave some thought to what it was like when I worked here, when certain other parties were in power, in particular the official opposition when they were last in power. I contemplated exactly how much of a difference we have in terms of the environment that exists in Ontario, the democratic political dynamic that exists in Ontario. I, like many in this House, can remember a time when an outgoing government wasn't forthcoming with the people of Ontario with respect to what kind of deficit lay behind—a \$6-billion hidden

deficit in 2003. I can remember budget speeches that weren't delivered inside this chamber, where they are supposed to be delivered—budget speeches that were delivered off-site, outside these four walls at places like Magna.

I can remember between 1995 and 2003 all kinds of mammoth omnibus legislation, bills that put forward things where the people of this province did not have the opportunity to participate in the proper kinds of discussions. I can remember the front lawn of this hallowed property being covered with individuals from all across Ontario, from all walks of life, who felt fundamentally that their democratic rights were being ignored, were being trampled on, and that they did not have the opportunity to participate in their own democracy.

Over the last nine years, the women and men serving on this side of this House as part of our government have worked extremely hard to make sure that we don't go back to those days, because the people of Ontario deserve far better.

I think of things like the fiscal accountability act—

*Applause.*

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Absolutely. I think of measures like the fiscal accountability act that effectively provide or make it impossible for outgoing governments to not be forthcoming about where things stand in terms of the budget and the numbers. I think of all the other rebuilding that we've done of vital public services, health care, education. I think about the change in tone and the change in attitude, respecting the will of the people of the province of Ontario.

I think about all of that, Madam Speaker, over the last nine years, with every budget and certainly in this latest budget. Those are the kinds of values that this legislation speaks to. When the Minister of Finance stood last week and presented this budget, those were the fundamental underpinnings of what he was talking about, and they speak to the very nature of Premier Wynne, Minister Sousa and the women and men who serve on this side of the House.

I think it's extremely important, as the Attorney General said in his opening remarks—I know the members of the official opposition, many weeks ago, without having taken the opportunity, without having taken the time to even consider a review of what would be in this budget, told the people of Ontario that they didn't want to participate in this process, that they didn't want to take the time to, frankly, do what they're elected to do to, which is to review this and provide constructive assistance to make sure, especially in the context of a minority Parliament, that we had the kind of budget that would speak to the desires and hopes and ambitions of the people of Ontario.

Notwithstanding the fact that the members of the PC caucus, under their leader, decided that they wanted to be absent from this process many, many weeks ago, I think a little bit irresponsibly, I would stand here in my place today and call on those members to reconsider in this regard, because I think it's extremely important, and,

frankly, the people of their respective communities elected them to take a look at this budget, to make sure this budget speaks to what the people who live in their communities want to see in terms of how the province is going to move forward. I would recommend that they reconsider, I would recommend that they take a look at it, because there are many instances in this budget where I believe, if they wanted to take a look, if they wanted to be reasonable and balanced and fair about this, they would see that there are many points of common interest.

I don't think it would come as a surprise to anyone here or beyond these walls that we all want this province to move forward, regardless of partisan stripe, regardless of colour. I hope the members of the official opposition, as I said, will take a serious look at this budget, will reconsider what I think was their irresponsible choice of a number of weeks ago, and will find a way to work with us and with members of the third party to put together the kind of budget, going forward, that will help the people of Ontario.

To the members of the third party, I would say, though you certainly haven't taken that irresponsible path I talked about a second ago that the official opposition did a couple of weeks ago, I understand that you still want to consider your options. That's perfectly acceptable and perfectly right in this context. We are, after all, in a minority Parliament. But I would strongly encourage you, as I said a second ago, to take a look at this budget, work with us. The Minister of Finance, the Premier and others on this side of the House have said repeatedly over the last number of weeks, and certainly since the budget was tabled, that we believe there is a way to move forward on this; we believe there's a way to work together on this. It's the hallmark of our government. It's the hallmark of our Premier and Minister of Finance. I believe we can get the job done on behalf of the people of Ontario. Frankly, Madam Speaker, that's what they ask of us, that's what they deserve of us, and that's what they demand of us.

I did have a chance to hear a little bit of what the leader of the NDP had to say in some of her remarks in response to the budget speech; I believe it was earlier this morning. Frankly, I didn't have a chance to listen to the whole thing—I was busy working on some other items—but I noted, I believe, at the outset of the leader's remarks that she talked about her own personal history.

1620

Again, as I gave some thought to what I was going to say in the Legislature today—I think that is an important perspective that we all have to bring to our debates and to our discussions and proceedings here. After all, where we come from, how we were raised, the environments in which we grew up—all of those have helped make us and shape us and have given us the abilities to assess and analyze and move forward and make decisions.

So as I heard the leader of the third party make those remarks, I thought a little bit about my own background and my own upbringing, Madam Speaker.

**Interjection:** Tell us.



**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thank you.

Not that many days ago—at least, it doesn't seem like that many days ago—I had the opportunity to deliver my maiden remarks in this chamber, and so some of this stuff might sound like a little bit of an echo of that. But I want to take just a couple of minutes to say that when I think of my own parents—my father, who came from Italy in 1958, and my mother, who came from Scotland in—I want to say 1961—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Point of order: the member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** On a point of order, Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to call the motion standing in the name of the member from Simcoe–Grey, MPP Jim Wilson, filed on April 29, 2013, for debate on May 15, 2013.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Is there consent? All those in favour?

I heard a no.

You may continue, the member for Vaughan.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I know that I'm relatively new in this chamber. I'll give the member opposite the benefit of the doubt. I'm not quite sure that I understand exactly what the inspiration was for that particular interjection. Understanding that it's a point of order, and that, I guess, is within the rules of this House, I will only say that if I was a less forgiving individual, I would presume that the member opposite was continuing to participate in those kinds of antics and those kinds of stunts that the people of this province do not respect and do not deserve.

So, with that, Madam Speaker, I'm going to return back to my remarks.

When I think about my parents, people who came from different parts of the world—as many parents and grandparents of those in this chamber did—I think of my own grandparents—again, from Italy, from Scotland—people who came to this country, in most cases, not necessarily with a lot of material possessions, but people who had certain ambitions and hopes for themselves, for their kids and for their grandchildren. They came to a country and, in the case of Ontario, came to a province where they wanted to take advantage of the opportunity that existed.

This is a budget that is all about making sure that we continue to provide this kind of opportunity for future generations, that we continue to move our province forward in that balanced, reasonable, responsible and fair way.

That's the name of this budget: the Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act. It's what's at the very heart of this budget, it's what's at the very heart of everything that our government has done over the last number of years, and it's what we plan to do, hopefully, with the help from the members opposite. Hopefully, if they're willing to participate with us, it's what we are determined to do over the next number of years.

As I said, Ontario is a great place in which to live and work. I know that earlier today, the Attorney General

talked a little bit about where Ontario found itself at the depths of the recession not that many years ago, and how this budget highlights the fact that over the last few years, in some regard because of the initiatives taken by this government, but largely because of the partnerships that we have developed with people in the private sector and across many sectors, our province now stands at a point where we have managed to recover all and more of the jobs that were lost at the depth of the recession.

As the Minister of Finance has said repeatedly and the Premier has said repeatedly, the people of Ontario expect and deserve a government that will provide them with high-quality public services. But they also expect that the costs of these services will not be unsustainable, and that these services will not lead to unsustainable debt levels and high interest costs for future generations. That's why our government is so committed and is on track to eliminating the deficit by 2017-18. Just as importantly, we are committed to reducing the net-debt-to-GDP ratio to the pre-recession level of 27%. We are taking a balanced approach to eliminating the deficit.

I mentioned a little while ago that I had the chance to work here as a staff person a number of years ago. During that same era, we saw a different approach to dealing with public services and balancing books and moving a province—at the time, admittedly, they said “forward.”

The people of Ontario have seen that movie before. They've seen that slash-and-burn approach to trying to balance the books. Ironically, Madam Speaker, the slash-and-burn approach to completely eviscerating public services while not successfully balancing the books, while leaving that kind of residual hidden \$5.6-billion or \$6-billion deficit—

**Interjection:** Who did it?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I believe that was the members of the official opposition.

That's a movie that we in this province have seen before and it's a movie that we've rejected more than once. It's why Ontarians are so determined that they have a government in place that will move forward in that balanced, fair and responsible way to make sure that we have a plan for jobs and growth.

The government's role, as I said earlier, in job creation is to encourage the right kind of environment for businesses and for entrepreneurs so that they can take risks, they can make investments, they can create jobs and they can drive innovation.

When I think about job creation, I know that, regardless of any other factor, I'm extremely blessed because I have the opportunity and the privilege to represent the people of Vaughan. It's an outstanding community. But it's also a community in many respects that's driven by that entrepreneurial flair and spirit. We are lucky in Vaughan, it's true, but we are lucky because, over the last nine years, in some cases because of the kinds of investments that this government has made, we have been at the leading edge of job creation in the GTA, in the municipality of Vaughan.

Just recently, over the last year, at a function in our community last year, the mayor of my community was able to stand up and talk about 500 new jobs coming to a brand new head office, the 905 head office, for KPMG. That's something that's going to happen in the relatively near future in something called the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.

Not that many days ago, I had the opportunity to go on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport to Vaughan Mills mall to the official opening of Legoland: 34,000 square feet of the only—

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Did you go to Bass Pro?

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Yes, near Bass Pro, in fact. The member from Beaches—East York is quite correct—near Bass Pro in the same mall. That's a mall that's not been open that many years, and yet it's performing at an extraordinarily highly functioning level.

But to look at the faces of the people working in Legoland to see how happy they were to have those employment opportunities—and there are so many more. The subway that's under construction in my community: It's going to be operating in 2015-16 or thereabouts. That's a project that has helped lead to, directly and indirectly, 20,000 jobs in my community and in the GTA.

Those are the kinds of investments that this government has been taking on over the last little while. As I said today—or if I didn't say it, I will say it now, and I know I've heard the minister say it before—the single most important thing that our government can do in order to secure Ontario's prosperity is to eliminate that deficit, our deficit, in a balanced way.

The 2012-13 deficit is now estimated to be \$9.8 billion, as the Minister of Finance said, just a number of days before the budget speech itself. That's a \$5-billion improvement compared with the 2012 budget forecast. The fiscal year that just ended marks the fourth year in a row that Ontario has reported a lower deficit than forecast. It's important to note that, while our work is not done—and I think a point of pride for this government, but a point of pride for all Ontarians to know—that we are the only government in Canada to achieve that level of success.

It also marks the second year in a row where the rate of growth in program spending is projected to be less than 1%. The deficit projection for 2013-14 is \$11.7 billion, and even that is an improvement of more than \$1 billion from the projection in last year's budget.

I know that a lot of people might say, "Well, those are just a bunch of numbers that the member from Vaughan is putting out there." But it is important to note that when you have a federal government that seems unable, at least in recent memory, to hit any of its recent deficit reduction targets; when you have provinces across the country that have those kinds of similar difficulties, I think it is extremely important to highlight, Madam Speaker, that here in Ontario, under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne, under the leadership of our finance minister, Charles Sousa, we are on track, as we've been for the last number of years, with respect to deficit reduction.

It is important to note that since the 2012 budget, expectations for global economic growth have weakened. European economies are in recession, and the growth in emerging markets has slowed. As we all know, Ontario does still rely heavily on the US market as a major export market, and the province faces significant challenges as a result of the high dollar and low productivity growth. Acknowledging these challenges and working with business, labour and other key partners to deal with them head-on will position our province for stronger growth. The government's economic plan will help Ontario face these challenges and stimulate growth.

With respect to that plan, there are certain points that I'd like to highlight.

**1630**

Ontario will promote its competitive business climate to attract new investment and jobs. Investments—and this is extremely important—in modern infrastructure renewal will continue. The 2013 budget provides more than \$35 billion for infrastructure investments over the next three years, including a new fund to help small and rural municipalities build roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure.

**Interjection:** That's a good thing.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Absolutely.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** The member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell is quite right to applaud; he and many others on this side of the House advocated so successfully for the inclusion of that kind of measure in this budget—

**Interjection:** And we listened to Ontarians.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:**—and they certainly listened. We all listened to Ontarians.

And we've heard members opposite talk about that kind of measure in my time over the last eight months in this House. Yet again, this is an issue on which the members of the PC caucus, I think, should find common cause with our budget and common cause with our Premier and Minister of Finance.

As I said earlier, in terms of continuing to encourage that kind of economic growth and prosperity, the province will continue to invest in skills and education for its workforce. The 2013 budget proposes a comprehensive Youth Jobs Strategy that invests \$295 million over two years. This strategy would generate job opportunities for about 30,000 youth. Madam Speaker, I don't want to speak for every other member of this Legislature, but I know in my own community, in Vaughan, how important this kind of measure is. I speak to parents regularly; I speak to grandparents regularly—people not unlike my own parents and grandparents, who, as I said a few minutes ago, had such high hopes for themselves, for their futures and their kids' futures. Perhaps for the first time ever, because of stuff that they're reading in newspapers, stuff that they're seeing on television, stuff that they're hearing about how unstable the world economy is these days, those parents and grandparents have a certain degree of anxiety. Their anxiety is not unfounded,



because our work needs to continue to go on. That's why I'm particularly proud, when I'm talking to them now, to be able to say that our government wants to move forward, hopefully with the support of the parties opposite, with this comprehensive Youth Jobs Strategy, to invest that much money in a strategy that will generate 30,000 opportunities for youth.

We will continue to strengthen the ability of Ontario's entrepreneurs to innovate and transform ideas into goods and services for global markets. This includes increasing access to capital, promoting arts and culture, and making it easier for manufacturers to invest in new machinery and new equipment.

Ontario will help its communities and regional economies benefit from opportunities. Key measures include promoting local food and reducing electricity costs for mining and forestry companies in the north. The government will also consider a range of new revenue tools to support the expansion of transportation and public transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

Our government, under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne, is committed to ensuring that all Ontarians have a reasonable chance to succeed, no matter where they live. Whether they live in the GTA, whether they live in the north, whether they live in an urban community or a rural community; regardless, we believe that all of us should be able to live, thrive and enjoy a high standard of living in each of our communities.

When I stand in this House from time to time, I spend an awful lot of time talking about my own community of Vaughan. I am very proud to represent this community, and I think there are certain perceptions of what my community is like—perhaps some misperceptions about what my community is like.

It is true that Vaughan, like many GTA municipalities, does have a reputation for being, relatively speaking, affluent. There is no doubt that there are many women and men who live in my community who have worked hard over a number of years—generations, in some cases—to be, to a certain degree, successful. But like all other growing municipalities, Vaughan continues to have its own challenges. Vaughan is not alone—it could be Richmond Hill, it could be Scarborough, it could be Don Valley East, it could be Oakville, or it could be others.

As our municipalities continue to grow, with thousands upon thousands of newcomers coming to our region, we continue to have ever-increasing complex challenges. That's why the other pillar of this year's budget is so important. It's important for communities like mine, and I believe it's important for communities right across the province of Ontario. Of course, I'm speaking about that second pillar: that whole notion of a fair society. That notion that any society, any community, any province is only as strong as its weakest link is something that's at the very heart of the kind of passion that's on display on a regular basis from Premier Kathleen Wynne and the people on this side of the House. I believe it speaks to a fundamental desire on the part of Ontarians to make sure that we have a fair society, that no one is inadvertently left behind.

Ontario's economic performance is stronger, as I said, when everyone has the opportunity to be gainfully employed, to participate in the life of their communities and contribute to the prosperity of our province.

Our government's plan for increasing prosperity and building that fair society involves continued investment in health care and education and transforming social assistance. This transformation will help more people find employment and provide better financial security.

The government will increase opportunities for people to save for retirement. Ontario will improve opportunities for youth, for people with disabilities, for aboriginal Ontarians, and it will protect the most vulnerable.

The new Ontario government is proposing to remove barriers to employment and to improve financial security for people who receive social assistance. For example, we propose to create a \$200 monthly earnings exemption for people who receive Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program benefits.

We propose to increase social assistance rates by 1%. We propose to improve the benefit rate of Ontario Works single adults without children, the group of social assistance recipients that experiences the lowest income, with a monthly top-up and increased cash and other liquid asset limits for people who receive Ontario Works.

Ontario is transforming health care services so that more people receive the care they need on a more timely basis. The 2012 budget committed to increasing investment in home care and community services by an average of 4% per year. This year's budget, the 2013 budget, proposes an additional 1% per year, for a total increase of over \$700 million by 2015-16 compared to 2012-13.

In the 2011 budget, this government introduced the Ontario Trillium Benefit, which combines payments of three different tax credits and delivers this assistance monthly to help people pay their bills as they arrive. Some people have asked for the ability to choose between monthly payments and one annual lump sum. The 2013 budget announces this option. Again, Madam Speaker, I don't want to speak for every member in this Legislature, but over the last number of months since I've had the privilege of serving here, I have heard from time to time from more than just a handful of my constituents about that particular Trillium Benefit, and I know, over the last number of days, as word has spread throughout my community, as local media and others have been talking about it, how favourably this is being received by people in my community of Vaughan. I'm sure the members opposite, including the member from Beaches-East York, who I know has given a great deal of thought to this particular idea and this particular option and has spoken about this option many times in this House—I am sure he will stand with us on this and applaud the movement that the Minister of Finance announced on this measure in last week's budget.

That goes right to the heart of what I'm talking about, when I said at the outset of my remarks today that there are many points of common interest. If the members

opposite from both other caucuses will put politics aside and the partisanship aside and that narrow view aside just for a quick second and think about the broader view, think about what's most important for the people of their communities and for the people of Ontario, they will see that in this budget in 2013, our government listened. We consulted extensively. We gave everyone the opportunity to provide constructive input—

**Interjection:** Six hundred thousand Ontarians.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** More than 600,000 Ontarians. And we are delivering, with this year's budget, on issues like the Ontario Trillium Benefit and on others.

Madam Speaker, I want to spend a couple of minutes talking a little bit more about the path to balance. It's something that I know is extremely important to the women and men of my community in Vaughan. I said this just a couple of minutes ago: that eliminating our deficit here in Ontario is the single most important step that our province can take with respect to making sure that our economy continues to grow and that we create jobs. We are strongly committed to eliminating our deficit by 2017-18 and to lowering that net debt to GDP ratio to the pre-recession level of 27%, once we balance the budget.

Ontario is beating its fiscal targets, due in large part to the transformation of how we deliver public services. Over the last year, the government began moving forward with about half of the recommendations made by the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, and this year our government will continue to move forward with a total of 60% of the recommendations.

To follow up and implement the Jobs and Prosperity Council recommendation that government consolidate all business support funding into a new Jobs and Prosperity Fund focused on innovation, productivity and exports, the government is announcing a technical panel to identify savings in business, and this panel will report back in six months.

**1640**

Now, it's true that businesses in Ontario currently enjoy a very competitive tax environment. The technical panel I mentioned a second ago will report back in six months with recommendations that will include restructuring, discontinuing, maintaining or replacing some credits with grants to ensure they are producing effective results that create jobs. Ontario is already also working closely with the federal government to close tax loopholes and to combat the underground economy. These are the right things to do to ensure that everyone is paying their fair share to protect public services and eliminate our deficit.

Ontario is a province with tremendous diversity and a strong economic foundation. In the face of global economic challenges, we continue to outperform many parts of the world. As our province moves forward through a sensitive economic recovery, we are taking, as I said a few minutes ago, the balanced approach, but not just the balanced approach—the most effective approach—to

eliminate the deficit and make smart investments in our people and in our infrastructure for long-term economic growth. Eliminating the deficit strengthens our economy and helps protect core public services, like schools and hospitals, which matter to people in Vaughan and matter, I know, to people across Ontario. These investments will help our province seize opportunities to compete in the global economy and create jobs here at home.

Our government is effectively managing the rate of growth in spending to keep Ontario on track to eliminate that deficit by 2017-18 and also making strategic investments to strengthen our economy. Our government is committed to helping all Ontarians succeed. Taking that balanced approach to strengthening the economy will help build a prosperous and fair Ontario for everyone. Ontario's 2013 budget makes smart investments that will strengthen the economy, help create jobs for youth and take action, as I said earlier, to eliminate that deficit.

I know I repeat myself a little bit when I talk about how important it is to make sure that we are doing this in a balanced and fair way. I participated in a virtual town hall just a number of days ago that I believe reached out to residents living in my own community of Vaughan but also municipalities like Richmond Hill, municipalities like Markham, municipalities like King township and others. I know these kinds of virtual town halls happened right around the province of Ontario. I know that many members, including the Minister of Labour and certainly others, did their own, in-person pre-budget consultations. And out of the work, as I said earlier, of the finance committee, as we reached out to people right across the province of Ontario and gave tens and tens of thousands of Ontarians—600,000 Ontarians—the opportunity to provide their constructive input, it was that balanced approach that they kept talking to me about. I think it's really important to stress that we reached out, that we asked people to provide that kind of input, and that they brought it forward.

Now, there are a number of initiatives—frankly, Madam Speaker, because this budget is so chock full of the kinds of things that are going to provide Ontarians with excellent opportunities going forward, I could talk all afternoon and evening, as many on this side might know, about what's in this budget, but there are a couple of other areas that I do want to highlight, because I believe they're important.

Certainly over the last number of weeks and months, this chamber and many people across Ontario have been a little bit seized with the issue of auto insurance. I know that, for example, the member opposite from Bramalea-Gore-Malton has spoken out repeatedly about this, as have many members on this side of the House. In our caucus on this side of the House and elsewhere, we have heard the message loud and clear. I've heard it from constituents of mine in Vaughan. I know that my seat-mate the member from Scarborough—Aginicourt has heard it, and many others have heard that people in our ridings, people across Ontario, are concerned about what's happening with respect to auto insurance. So our govern-



ment, in this budget this year, is proposing an auto insurance cost and rate reduction strategy that would reduce premiums by 15% on average for Ontario drivers. This strategy would also intensify our government's existing work to address the critical issues in the system and increase accountability and transparency to help ensure that cost savings will result in lower premiums for Ontario drivers.

In just a second, I will spend a bit of time talking in greater detail about these measures, but there's something that I think it's important to stress about our plans with respect to how we want to move forward and build more fairness in the system regarding auto insurance. I know a lot of stuff has been said back and forth in this chamber, and I know a lot of stuff has been said, frankly, via the media, about exactly what approach is necessary to make sure that we are providing more affordable auto insurance premiums for the people of our ridings.

But when I took a bit of time to think about this particular issue and how I wanted to address it today, I realized that through many, many years, over many years, more than once since we came back to power in 2003, and many times before that, the issue of insurance in Ontario, and the issue of auto insurance particularly in Ontario, is one of those issues that flares up from time to time; it periodically flares up.

I see the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton has entered the chamber, which is fantastic news, given that we're talking about the auto insurance issue right now.

This is the kind of issue that flares up from time to time. I believe one of the reasons that this issue flares up from time to time is, frankly, because far too often in the past governments of all stripes have treated this issue like a political football and have come up with simplistic ideas, simplistic solutions that don't have any sustainability about them. They don't take into account what people are feeling and what folks from the industry itself are saying—and all walks of the industry, not just the insurers themselves.

So what I'm particularly happy about in this year's budget is that the Minister of Finance and others on this side of the House gave very serious thought and consideration to trying to figure out exactly how we could produce some ideas and some solutions so that this issue would not flare up from time to time. We didn't want a quick political fix. We didn't want any kind of bumper sticker politics around this. We wanted a sustainable fix. We wanted a sustainable solution that make sense for the people of Vaughan, for Scarborough, for Brampton and Bramalea—for all communities across Ontario.

That's why I'm particularly proud to talk a little bit about the auto insurance strategy that appears in this year's budget. For example, if implemented—and I sincerely hope it will be, with the support of the members opposite—our auto insurance strategy would build on the success of the government's 2010 reforms and a series of fraud prevention regulatory amendments in January 2013. It is essential that further action be taken to ensure that reductions to premiums can continue from these reforms.

A number of critical issues are leading to cost uncertainties for insurers and are preventing significant premium reductions for Ontario's over nine million drivers. Our government is taking strong action on these issues. To achieve the premium reduction, our government will introduce legislative amendments that would, if passed:

- legislate a premium reduction of 15%, on average, within a period of time to be prescribed by regulation;

- require insurers to offer lower premiums for consumers with safe driving records;

- give the Financial Services Commission of Ontario the authority to license and to oversee business practices of health care clinics and practitioners who invoice auto insurers;

- provide the Superintendent of Financial Services with the authority to require insurers to file for rates;

- make the superintendent's guidelines binding, incorporated by reference in the statutory accident benefits schedule;

- expand and modernize the superintendent's investigation and enforcement authority, particularly in the area of fraud prevention; and

- consolidate statutory automobile insurance reviews.

Madam Speaker, to increase accountability and transparency, a new independent annual report by outside experts will look at the impact of reforms introduced to date on both costs and premiums. The report will review industry costs and changes to premiums, and recommend further actions that may be required to meet the government's reduction targets.

The government will intensify its existing cost and rate reduction strategy by transforming the current auto insurance dispute resolute system by appointing an expert to review the system and propose legislative amendments in the fall of 2013; base auto insurance benefits on medical evidence, including directing the regulator to provide an interim report this year on the progress of the minor injury treatment protocol project; and investigate additional new measures to reward safe driving and reduce costs and premiums.

Our government will call on the Financial Services Commission of Ontario to reduce the return-on-equity benchmark used and rate filings, and our government will also conduct further study and consultation on other initiatives to reduce costs, including provincial oversight of towing and amending the definition of "catastrophic impairment" in the statutory benefits schedule.

Madam Speaker, I think it's important to note that from 2006 to 2010, Ontario experienced a substantial increase in claims costs because of fraud on the system and overuse of benefits. The significant increase in costs was primarily caused by increases in accident benefits claims costs; for example, exams and assessments, attendant care and housekeeping. While claims costs for repairs to physical damage to vehicles remained stable, claims costs for certain benefits more than doubled.

#### 1650

Due to the generosity of Ontario's auto insurance system, accident benefits claims costs in 2006 were

already much higher than in other provinces with similar private auto insurance systems such as Alberta, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador. From 2006 to 2010, these costs in Ontario went up even higher, increasing by 91%.

Within Ontario, accident benefits claims costs grew especially quickly in the greater Toronto area between 2006 and 2010. It's important to note that of the \$2.4 billion in increases, \$2 billion occurred here in the greater Toronto area. In 2010, accident benefits claims costs per vehicle in the greater Toronto area were more than four times higher than in rural Ontario.

In September 2010, the government introduced major reforms to Ontario's auto insurance system to address the substantial increase in claims costs. These reforms controlled costs, increased consumer choice and simplified processes in the system. As a result of the reforms and ongoing government action, costs have been reduced and rates have been stabilized and have now started to decline.

The government built on the success of the September 2010 reforms by announcing an Auto Insurance Anti-Fraud Task Force in the 2011 Ontario budget. The task force received more than 50 presentations and submissions from interested parties, including the insurance industry, health care providers and consumer groups, and submitted three reports to the government over the course of its work.

The task force's final report in 2012 contained 38 recommendations in the areas of fraud prevention, detection, enforcement and regulatory roles. In January 2013, the government took early action and approved regulatory amendments to address some of the reforms proposed in the final report of the Auto Insurance Anti-Fraud Task Force and to build on earlier actions taken to combat fraud and protect consumers.

Madam Speaker, as you contemplate this and some of the other measures that have been undertaken by our government over the last number of years, you see that on this side of the House, the issue of auto insurance affordability is something that our government takes extremely seriously. We have heard loud and clear—certainly, in my own community, I have heard loud and clear—that these are issues that are of concern to the people of Ontario.

I know that members opposite, like the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton, have brought these issues forward. I know, for example, that on several of the standing committees of this Legislature, these issues have come up from time to time. Members of the industry and members from other aspects of the industry—the brokers etc.—have come forward to talk to us very passionately and very knowledgeably about what they understand to be some of the problems in the system.

I know that what you find in this year's budget regarding auto insurance has taken into account all of the ideas, all of the analysis and all of the research. What we've come forward with, I believe, is a package of ideas and reforms that will help make sure, as I said a little bit

earlier today, that we aren't continuing to play a bit of a political game around this issue—that we are avoiding what sometimes, for all politicians, is that very easy attempt to degenerate into bumper-sticker politics.

It's too important, in terms of making sure that auto insurance either becomes or remains affordable for drivers across Ontario, that we embark on these kinds of reforms, because this is the best way to ensure that we will have sustainable solutions to this particular problem and that we won't be back here in this chamber in a number of months or in a couple of years having another debate, another discussion and another conversation or dialogue—that we actually have the kind of fixes that will help our system continue to be affordable.

I do want to spend just a little bit of time—I see how many minutes I have left, and there is so much good news to be considered in this year's budget. I want to talk a little bit about numbers, the revenues and expenses that we have in this year's budget. Total revenue in the 2012-13 budget is estimated to be \$114.2 billion. This is \$1.7 billion above the amount projected in the 2012 budget.

This increase is due to higher taxation revenues and higher net income from government business enterprises, as well as higher other-non-tax revenues. Lower government of Canada transfers partially offset the overall increase. Revenues are projected to increase at an average annual rate of 3% over the 2012-13 to 2015-16 period.

In terms of expenses—and I think this is extremely important to note in terms of the kind of work that we have undertaken on this side of the House regarding how we perform and how we have reformed public services in the province of Ontario.

Total expense in the 2012-13 budget is projected to be \$2.4 billion lower than forecast in the 2012 budget, a result of our government's commitment to managing growth in program spending—program spending that is projected to be held to less than 1% for the second year in a row, along with lower-than-forecast interest on debt expense.

Program expense is \$2.1 billion lower than projected in the 2012 budget. This change is a result of the one-time savings in the education sector as well as efforts across all ministries to contain growth in spending and manage within their budgets. In fact, 16 out of 25 ministries—or more than 60%—are projected to spend below their 2012 budget allocation in 2012-13, helping to hold growth in program spending to less than 1% for the second year in a row.

When I talk about a balanced approach and a responsible and fair approach to making sure that we reduce our deficit, get back to balance and keep our economy moving, these paragraphs—this section of the budget—speaks to that very eloquently. There is no need—notwithstanding what the leader of the official opposition and the people serving in his caucus say on a regular basis—to engage in the kind of slash-and-burn politics, the slash-and-burn ideas or agenda that I talked about.

In fact, not only is there no need to participate in that kind of government or those kinds of politics; it doesn't



make sense. It doesn't make sense when we are on track, if not ahead of schedule, to achieve our targets, when we are keeping program spending to low levels, while at the same time preserving the kind of core public services in areas like health care and education and the revitalization of our crucial public infrastructure. There is no reason. In fact, the recipe—or the formula—that they've developed on that side of the House is, frankly, nothing more than a pathway to poverty for the people of Ontario.

We are making progress. We are ahead of schedule. We will continue to work hard to make sure that we accomplish and achieve our goals in that balanced and fair way that I talked about earlier today.

The total expense outlook is lower each and every year compared with the medium-term forecast in the 2012 budget, representing a projected cumulative reduction in total expense of \$3.8 billion over the next three years. I also want to note that compensation costs account for more than 50% of Ontario-funded program spending, either paid directly to the Ontario public service or as part of the government's transfer payments to schools, hospitals and other public sector partners. All public sector partners, including employers and bargaining agents, need to work together to control current and future compensation costs, including wages, benefits and pensions.

Additionally, an advisory panel will be appointed to review compensation practices for senior executives in the broader public sector. This panel's mandate will include the consideration of hard caps on compensation, while recognizing the need to hold senior executives accountable for the results that they need to produce.

The government—our government—respects collective agreements and the collective bargaining process and will not override existing collective agreements. Such actions, as proposed by members in the official opposition and by their leadership, would not only create significant legal risks; they would also undermine the ability of responsible employers and bargaining agents to increase productivity, maintain services and ensure fiscal sustainability through respectful bargaining that reflects Ontario's economic circumstances.

I think it's extremely important to note that salaries have been frozen for designated executives at hospitals, universities, colleges, school boards and provincially owned electricity companies. All aspects of compensation plans are frozen, and base salaries cannot be increased. In addition, the overall performance-pay envelopes at designated employers are frozen. Those restraint measures will be in place until the budget is balanced in 2017-18. As we all know in this chamber, members of provincial Parliament will also continue to see their wages frozen, bringing the total length of the freeze to five years.

Ontario public sector settlements are now below the average of those in the private sector, municipal sector and the federal public sector. Pension expense forecasts are down, in part as a result of successful efforts to contain public sector wage growth, and these results have been achieved while protecting jobs and services.

Madam Speaker, I could go on. There is an awful lot more in this budget that I'd like to talk about: issues relating to economic growth, issues that speak to some of the job creation ideas, the investments in health care and education, the continued investments in the revitalization of crucial public infrastructure.

**1700**

But these last numbers of sentences that I spoke to just a second ago, I think, are really important when one takes into account some of the unfortunate fearmongering that is emanating from the official opposition, and has been, over the last number of weeks.

On a virtually daily basis, I come into this House to represent the people of my constituency and I hear the leader of that party and the members of that caucus talk incessantly about why there needs to be a combative, adversarial approach to moving Ontario forward, why there seems to be nothing but vitriol and anger and bitterness emanating from that particular side of the House. Madam Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I'd ask the member to—

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I'll withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I think it's important to stress that there is a way to move Ontario forward, the way that we on this side of the House have been moving Ontario forward for the last nine years, and that is to make sure that we continue to engage in dialogues and discussions; to make sure that we bring everyone inside the tent, that we bring business into the room, that we bring labour into the room, that we bring everyone into the room who wants to provide constructive ideas, constructive analysis, thoughtful dialogue, so that we can continue to move our province forward.

In this year's budget, the Minister of Finance laid out, as I said at the outset of my remarks, a blueprint to make sure that we continue on that path. We have had a very successful run over the last nine years, working with Ontarians, and I know that if we continue to move forward in this vein—and hopefully, we are able to continue moving forward, because the members opposite, particularly members from the third party, who are keeping an open mind about this process, unlike their counterparts in the PC caucus—hopefully, we will be able to move Ontario forward. I know that we can do it. We've been doing it for the last nine years.

I know that on this side of the House, we ask all members to come together with us, support this year's budget, keep Ontario on the right track and move forward together.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm pleased to provide a couple of minutes of comments to the speeches from the Attorney General and the member for Vaughan. I appreciate that the member for Vaughan was a bit more measured. I

found my colleague the Attorney General was a bit more combative in his speech this morning.

However, I do want to make a few comments, because I do disagree with a number of points that the member from Vaughan mentioned.

I think he alluded to the Magna budget, and in my understanding, the ruling talked about, rather than sending the budget address outside of this chamber, that it be presented in this place. I know that their plan has always been that they leak the budget out, prior to its presentation in front of the members. So, you know, I'm not going to judge what's worse. However, I think the member should realize that their hands aren't clean on that file as well.

I think anyone who reads page 208 of the budget really understands why some of us are upset: the fact that spending has been increased by \$3.6 billion in this budget. As well, I believe quite strongly that the McGuinty-Wynne government has put their own party's fortunes ahead of those hard-working Ontarians who want some relief in terms of spending. I think they're the ones who have had the irresponsible choice. I disagree with his comments. I think we've been involved in the process, but there's a fundamental difference in how our party would handle, I think, a responsible way as opposed to the coalition that I see here this morning.

I hope that the critic for the New Democrats will finally get an opportunity to speak. I feel that his leader has muzzled him a bit, and I really want to hear from the other party. They've got \$1 billion worth of goodies, and I think he should have the right to speak.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Timiskaming—Cochrane has two minutes.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's a great opportunity for me to speak for my first comments on G65, the so-called Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act.

I'd like to respond directly to the member for Vaughan. For the people at home, from northern Ontario, that's where Bass Pro Shops are, if you want to picture that. He made a statement about how it's all about opportunity for Ontario, but not once in the leadoff speech was northern Ontario mentioned, and that's about—

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** That's not true.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** No, no. And some of the things I'd like to talk about—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** There has been a cut to MNDM of \$50 million, and one of the reasons given by the Minister of Northern Development and Mines is because they save money on the transportation side of ONTC. So, while we talk about transit in southern Ontario, we've lost our train transportation in northern Ontario, and that's seen as a good thing. Yes, in the budget document they created a committee to talk about ONTC, but they didn't actually give the committee any real power, because the committee can only look at the divestment of northern Ontario infrastructure, and once again that's seen as a good thing. In southern Ontario, we want to

invest in infrastructure. In northern Ontario, we want to talk about strategies but sell infrastructure.

One other vital piece of infrastructure that's mentioned in a couple of lines, and we've heard about it for years, is the Ring of Fire, but there's no real attempt in this budget to say how we're actually going to get there. Before all Ontarians benefit from the Ring of Fire, we have to have a real plan with real numbers behind it to say how we're going to get there, and that's also sorely lacking in this budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Oakville.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise on the 2013 budget and pass some comments on those comments that were made by the Attorney General and by the member from Vaughan, which—it's no surprise—I agreed with entirely. I thought they put the budget and the process we're engaged in in pretty good perspective.

I'm looking to the budget, and I think my constituents look to the budget—as much as there's a game going on here and there will be a lot of politics and a lot of partisanship, I'm sure, exhibited over the next weeks and months, what they're looking for is what impacts them on a daily basis.

Certainly what I'm seeing in my community is there's an increasing need for home care. We're finding we are being successful at moving people out of the hospital setting and into the community. What they're saying is, "If you are going to take me out of the hospital and put me in my home, make sure you've got the nurses, make sure you've got the people who can come and assist me in my home." This calls for an increased investment in that.

Something that we compel the people of this province to do is to have automobile insurance, so, certainly, as a province, we have a role to play in that. Some members from the third party and from my own party have expressed a concern with fraud in the industry, and they've also expressed a concern with rising premiums. This budget, I think, goes a long way towards putting in place a process that is going to result in improvements in that regard.

Many of our young people, despite having a 7% to 8% unemployment rate in Ontario—you'll find that the unemployment rate for youth in Ontario is about double that and perhaps even more. When you see the youth employment strategy in this, when you see that we're starting to put in place some initiatives that are going to result in long-term jobs for young people in our society, I think it's a good thing.

All in all, with the investment in transit—we're making that full-time. The gas tax is now going to be a full-time, permanent investment in Ontario's municipalities.

Certainly, I know the mayor of Oakville and our council support this budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Prince Edward—Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate here and comment on some of the comments made by the



member from Vaughan over the last 45 minutes or so, following up on the comments from the Attorney General this afternoon.

It's quite frightening to me, as a member of the official opposition and a resident of eastern Ontario and rural Ontario, when the member from Vaughan actually says that this government is on track and on schedule to meet their targets when, clearly, this province is headed in the wrong direction. I merely have to go to an article that was in today's Toronto Star, written by the not-so-stealthily left-winger Martin Regg Cohn, who said, "Finance Minister Charles Sousa argued in his budget speech that eliminating the deficit is the 'single most important step' the government can take to revive the economy." Meanwhile, we have a deficit before us for this current year at \$9.8 billion, and that is actually going to increase next year to \$11.7 billion. So all you have to do is look at the budget that they presented last week, partially written by the NDP leader, Andrea Horwath, to realize that we're headed in the wrong direction.

1710

I have to look at this comment as well, from Mr. Regg Cohn: "The finance minister seemed clueless about how to deal with the bigger challenge in his debut budget. It's about the economy, Sousa," it says.

It just seems crazy to me that the members on the other side can actually stand up with such fragile confidence, I would think, and say that they're ahead of schedule, and clearly the numbers in their very own budget show otherwise. We're in a dangerous situation. We're in a grave situation in Ontario, Madam Speaker, if this is the direction that we're headed. We're paying \$12 billion this year in interest. That's \$12 billion that won't go to keep our nurses working or our educators in their schools. That number is headed to \$14.5 billion in two years' time at this pace.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Vaughan has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** Thanks very much, Madam Speaker. I'd like to begin by thanking the members from Leeds–Grenville and Timiskaming–Cochrane, the hard-working member from Oakville, and the member from Prince Edward–Hastings for their comments and for their questions. I only have two minutes, or less than that now, so I just want to mention a couple of points.

To the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, who raised a very important point about the needs and the desires and the ambitions of the folks who live in northern Ontario, I do want to make sure he understands that although I might not have specifically mentioned northern Ontario in my leadoff remarks, it is important to note that there are a number of initiatives brought forward in this year's budget, the kinds of initiatives that have been fought for and advocated very successfully and aggressively by members like those that we have on this side of the House from Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury and, of course, Thunder Bay. In particular, I wanted to highlight the new \$100 million that's been set aside for crucial infrastructure—roads, bridges etc.—for both

northern Ontario communities and rural Ontario communities. That's something that I know the Minister of Infrastructure and the Minister of Rural Affairs will be working on with all of those communities, particularly those crucial communities in northern Ontario, to make sure we implement in the right way.

With respect to the member from Prince Edward–Hastings, I would only say this: First of all, I've only been in the House for a very short period of time, and I'm awestruck that that member opposite has now taken to actually quoting from the Toronto Star. I think that's an impressive evolution in his own particular thought processes. But I would also say that I have never, in all of my time—not just in this House, but in my life—ever seen a group of individuals who are so determined to ignore simple mathematics. We are billions of dollars ahead of schedule with respect to our deficit reduction targets—something that their cousins in Ottawa seem completely unable and unwilling to accomplish. The province of Ontario, under the leadership of Premier Wynne, is the penultimate example of deficit reduction target hitting in the country of Canada. I would invite the members opposite to actually take out their calculators, do the math, join with us and support this year's budget.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Further debate? The member for Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

The first thing I want to do is to make it clear that I will be sharing my time with the member from Durham, because the clock's going to run out around 6 o'clock, and this debate won't resume until tomorrow. So the member from Durham will continue.

I can't help but start by doing what would be the equivalent of a two-minute comment on the presentation by my opposite number, the parliamentary assistant, my friend from Vaughan, because he made a couple of comments that are worthy of some reaction.

What he said basically was—and I made some notes—we were supposed to, here on this side, want to read this and work on it together, that one way or another, he would hope that we would engage in some reconsideration. But I've got to say that he was going on the premise that somehow or other we're voting against a budget in this. We've made it clear from the outset that we will not be voting against a budget. In fact, on the floor of this House, when the question is called, of course we will vote no on the budget, but what we're voting against is a government. We're voting against the way the Liberal government does business. We cannot any longer accept it. I said in my speech yesterday—

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** So you actually like the budget.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:**—when we were talking about the budget motion, what we said—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Why don't you be quiet for a change? You know, you're very noisy. Okay?

In any event, we're voting against a government.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** You made it a point to say you've been here for eight months.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Sorry, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Thank you, Speaker.

The member for Vaughan said that he'd been here for eight months. I've been here for closer to eight years at this point. That doesn't mean I'm smarter than him; it means I've been around longer.

This would be, I guess, the seventh budget I've heard from this government, if you don't count the ones that came before I arrived in this chamber. And do you know what? In some ways, this is the same budget you always present and it's in many ways the same budget that we've come to expect. It talks about how you're going to create jobs and it talks about how you're going to calm the economy and turn things around. When it doesn't talk about what you're going to do, it talks about what the world has done to create the situation that poor Ontario finds itself in.

He also talks about the fact that he would like to see a hospital materialize in his riding. That's the same hospital that I want in Vaughan, and hospitals in general. Thornhill wants that too. He wants transit to expand and he believes that this budget will allow for transit to expand. I don't see that. But I just as much want transit to expand as my friend from Vaughan. I want the same great health care and education as my friend from Vaughan wants. But do you know what? With a budget like that, we have no right and no business to expect that to happen. So that's my response to his request for reconsideration. I have a problem reconsidering anything when it comes to the budgets that come out of this particular government.

As I was beginning to say, I quoted Einstein's theory on the definition of insanity, which is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. That's precisely what this government has done over the period of time—at least the period of time that I've found myself present in this House.

Let me go to my own notes. I was handed, as I always am by my staff, a series of speaking points that I might want to work from that are based on what I wanted to say. I kind of rejected them when a couple of things came along over the course of recent time. I didn't write these and my staff didn't write them, but there are a couple of newspaper columnists who did, and I'd like to read pieces of these into the record because they so address the situation we find ourselves in.

One comes from what my friends over there—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Excuse me. If you have conversations, please take them out of the chamber.

The member for Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Thank you, Speaker.

One of them comes from a paper that would be characterized by my friends on the other side as leaning more right, and the other one comes from a paper that we would characterize as leaning more left, so I think it's appropriate to put some of these comments on the record.

This one is in the Financial Post. It comes from Friday's edition, the day after the budget. It's written by Jason Clemens and Niels Veldhuis and it's entitled, "It's Not Our Problem: Ontario Liberals Kick Deficit Can Down the Road." The salient points I want to put on record read as follows:

"The May 2 minority Liberal budget is a politically expedient document that likely avoids an election but unfortunately fails to tackle Ontario's looming fiscal crisis. The longer the province waits, the more difficult and painful the reforms will be when the inevitable day of reckoning arrives.

"Minister of Finance Charles Sousa was quick to trumpet the \$5-billion improvement in last year's (2012-13) deficit which came in at \$9.8-billion instead of the original \$14.8-billion. Of course, what he didn't mention is that over half of the improvement came about from one-time events, including a \$1.2-billion boost in corporate tax revenues from tax assessments for years prior and \$1.5-billion in savings from reducing liabilities associated with public sector sick-day banking." That would be the teachers.

"In addition, Minister Sousa failed to mention that the budget projects a worse deficit in 2013-14, when the deficit is expected"—by his figures—"to increase to \$11.7 billion."

It goes on to say, "Clearly, the Liberals are kicking the can down the road"—isn't that an interesting phrase; my leader, Tim Hudak, has used that so many times, but these are independent writers—"and when they get there, they simply kick it further."

Sub-headline: An "inability to control government spending came through loud and clear...."

"This unfortunate history is critical since a significant part of the Liberal 'plan' for deficit reduction is premised on the government's future ability to constrain spending growth and rein in compensation. Beyond that, the Liberals will need decent economic growth, stable increases in revenues, and continuing low interest rates.

"In short, it's not a plan grounded in reality."

1720

The final paragraph that I want to read from this particular article is:

"A recent analysis by University of Guelph economist Ross McKittrick calculated that Ontario's electricity prices will soon be near the highest in North America, if not the highest.

"Passing a budget when a government is in minority is always a tricky business. Unfortunately, all of the serious problems of deficits, debt, competitiveness, and energy prices were deferred to the future."

That's what writers who are independent thinkers wrote in the Financial Post last week about this budget.



I said that I was going to deal with some sources that were a little bit unorthodox. That was one of them. This one is really unorthodox, because it's more a source that I would expect to hear from Liberals than I would from Conservatives. More importantly, it comes from the Toronto Star, which some of us here on this side occasionally think is almost the house organ of the Liberal Party. I've heard people say of the Toronto Star, "You would be better informed if you read no newspaper than if you read the Toronto Star." I'm not saying that, especially this time.

This is an editorial in today's paper—no less than today's paper—written by Martin Regg Cohn, who works here at Queen's Park. He is the fellow who writes the editorials that are based on the goings-on in this place—in other words, political commentary on Ontario. It's captioned, "It's About the Economy, Charles Sousa."

Now, as people here know, that's a play on a quote that comes from James Carville, also known as the Ragin' Cajun, and that quote goes back to Clinton days. What he had originally said was, "It's about the economy, stupid." I'm not suggesting for a moment that we should equate the word "stupid" with Charles Sousa; the man is not. He's the finance minister. I respect his title and, frankly, I respect him.

So I'm not calling the minister stupid, but I'm calling his motivation into question, with the budget that he has presented. I would have to say that at this point, what we've got is a brand new finance minister who is the victim of his own party, and he's demonstrating a certain level of ineptness in how he has handled this.

I think, without putting words in Regg Cohn's mouth, that that's what he's trying to say. I'd like to put some of what Martin Regg Cohn has placed on the record in our record here in Hansard.

He says: "The big story in Ontario's budget isn't the political concessions to the NDP. Nor is it the austerity measures aimed at eliminating the deficit.

"The real news relates to our slumping economy and the sense that no one in government—or the private sector—knows how to deal with it.

"Finance Minister Charles Sousa argued in his budget speech that eliminating the deficit is the 'single most important step' the government can take to revive the economy.

"But it's not the only step.

"Eliminating the deficit is a means to an end, not an end in itself."

He goes on to talk about what happened on The Agenda the other night. I was on that program, along with my colleague from the NDP and the minister himself. What they were putting on the screen—I didn't see what was on the screen; I was sitting in the studio—according to Mr. Regg Cohn, was the NDP demand and the Liberal response, and everything was captioned "Asked and Answered."

"The finance minister seemed clueless about how to deal with the bigger challenges in his debut budget. It's

about the economy, Sousa." Again, this is coming from Martin Regg Cohn.

"It's a tale of declining productivity, competitiveness," research and development "and machinery investment, amid soaring labour output costs.

"Ontario's economy will grow by a paltry 1.5% in 2013—our third consecutive decline, year over year—well behind" the United States, running at 2.1%.

"While the US remains the major destination for Ontario's goods, our share of American imports is roughly half what it was in 2000....

"Hitch our wagon to the listless US market? We can barely keep pace....

"Is there a way to balance the budget while bolstering economic growth? New Democrats and some economists on the left believe stimulus is the only answer (the deficit be damned). Tories and business economists call for tax cuts (again, the deficit be damned)." This is according to Regg Cohn again.

"One recent analysis, from the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity, argues that Ontario must rein in the deficit because of rising interest costs, but should also ramp up educational spending because it lags other provinces (per capita). It also calls for more investment in infrastructure, such as transit, because it pays future dividends."

Finally, he says, "Government can help set the table, but it can't singlehandedly instill an entrepreneurial spirit in Ontario's commercial classes." To that, the member from Thornhill, Peter Shurman—me—says, you know what? Setting that table properly makes the guests want to come for dinner.

That's what our party is about: It's about saying that if we balance the budget and we generate on the part of the credit rating agencies, and if we put out the word to the world around us and to entrepreneurs who live here amongst us that it's okay to spend money because there's stability here and there's a steady workforce that wants to work, then we start to prosper.

That's not what this budget is saying, and it has been consistently for the past 10 budgets over nine and a half years not what that government is saying. That's why we don't support the budget, and that's why we said, before the budget came down and we could even see it, that we were not prepared to support that government.

In terms of reading the budget, and this is not the first time you'll hear this from me, because there are going to be some question periods ahead, we read this budget. We read it really well. I question whether or not any members over on that side who are going to debate this budget bothered reading word one, because they were told, "This is the Kool-Aid. You drink it, and you vote for it," because that's what they always do.

Well, let me refer to the notes that my compatriots upstairs have dutifully prepared, now that I've gone almost 15 minutes courtesy of the people who write in the various newspapers. One of the things that hasn't been touched upon by anybody so far, other than to say that we did it, is that there is a committee called the

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. For the people who are viewing us at home, it's worth saying that we use an acronym, SCOFEA, which is the first letter of each of the words that I just cited. That committee, SCOFEA, travelled the province to find out what people around the province, stakeholders around the province and organizations—whether they were poverty organizations, corporate organizations, native people, or whoever it may have been—had to say about what should happen in the budget process.

Ostensibly, those trips generate information that is supposed to inform the budget process, that is supposed to be given to the minister, that the minister reads and considers in formulating his budget. I would have to say that—because in a parallel universe, the finance minister is running his own private hearings, and we out here, we mere MPs on the other side of the House, have no way of even knowing who he even talked to or what process informed his budget, other than the party over here to my left—I don't know whether he read anything that came out of our report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, SCOFEA. I don't think he did. I certainly intend to put some of those things into the record as I speak here today.

I'll start with a quote: "You cannot dig your way out of a ditch, you cannot eat your way into being thinner," and, Minister, you cannot spend to reduce a deficit. What a great quote, and it came from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. That's what it comes down to. That's the kind of thing that you have to listen to. These are people who represent other people.

That's the nature of the travelling that we do. That's the reason why we take taxpayer money, and we spend it well, which is paying for travel at a modest rate, staying in modest hotels, eating modest meals and listening to people who have spent their own money or their organization's money to come see us and say, "Here's what we've found, here's what we think, and here's what we think you ought to do." Wouldn't it be nice if, once in every little while, these people got listened to?

Instead, who was listened to? The third party, with seven demands so that that party could stay in power. That's the budget that you want us to vote for and support? I don't think so.

"The solutions to Ontario's problems aren't hard to figure out"—my leader said this, so I'll tell you who I'm quoting, and he's right—"The solutions to Ontario's problems aren't hard to figure out, they're just not easy to do."

1730

Ontario needs a government that has a plan to reduce spending, to create jobs, and the courage to implement it, and you can't just say you have one and make it so. You have to actually have one. For the past year and a half since the last election, which—hey, look, we've got 36 members here and you've got more than that, so you won it even if you have a minority. We know that. We decided that we were going to win the next one, and we understand what the mistakes are that we made, so we

started to address them, and for a year and a half, the people sitting around me and all of the people who represent the caucus here and our leader, Tim Hudak, and legions of Progressive Conservatives around this province, have participated in a process that has produced a series of white papers.

No, those white papers are not the additive completion of our platform; they are a way of consulting properly—not with a 1-800 number but properly—with people in Ontario who want to say something about how their government should work. By putting out white papers, we tried all of those ideas, and not all of them were accepted—some of them were. At a given point in time—in two weeks or two months or in a year or whenever it happens to be—there will be an election, and the amalgam of the ideas that came across to us as positive will be put into a platform, and that's what will go out, and it will properly reflect what the people in Ontario believe. As a result of that, I expect my party will wind up going to the other side and you guys are going to be over here. Anyway, that's us Progressive Conservatives.

I want to say something else about Progressive Conservatives. In the course of Finance Minister Sousa's comments to the media in the course of budget day, when we were all in the lock-up, I took the occasion to watch the minister carefully and listen to what it was he had to say, and he went to some considerable lengths and spent some considerable time talking about the alternatives that people had: They can either accept the budget that he has presented as something that actually would stimulate the economy, actually would create jobs and all the rest of it, or they could go with our party which really engages in slash-and-burn politics. This is the word that's always put across to us—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Why don't you be quiet too—for a change?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Vaughan.

**Mr. Steven Del Duca:** I'm relatively new to this chamber, but I can't believe that that's acceptable behaviour or parliamentary behaviour from the member from Thornhill. That's twice now in his remarks today that he's done that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Thornhill to continue.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'll respond to that, Speaker, in the course of my comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Continue with your remarks. Thank you.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** That's fine.

Slash and burn, slash and burn—what is it that the party on the other side actually thinks that this party is about? Do you think that we're going to close all the schools, and your kid is not going to get an education? Do you think we're going to close down hospital beds, and we're going to let people die? What is it you think we're going to do?



Here's what we are going to do. Here's what your talking means to us. It means something that you people have no concept about, and that is, when you take in an amount of money, that's the amount of money that you have to spend, and that's called balancing a budget, and because of the mess that that party has made, it will take us some time to do it, but we think we can do it in about two years. It will be hard, it will be heavy lifting, but it can be done, and that's what we intend to do.

So when we get accused of slash and burn and what nonsense that is, in terms of how we would deal with Ontario, I get incensed, and sometimes when you hear an outburst from me or another member on my side, that's what it's about, because we're mis-accused of motives that are less than noble and we're mis-accused of being able to run the province as well—and I certainly think better than that party has done, and we have 10 years of history by way of the proof point. So I'm really quite tired of hearing about that.

Too many people in Ontario at this point are having trouble finding work, and what's happening here is they're losing hope in their province. They're losing hope in their province, and we call that the Fort McMurray syndrome. My colleague from Leeds—Grenville has two sons working at Fort McMurray. I have a son who is out in northern British Columbia. Why are our kids out there? Because they want to see the mountains or because they want to play with oil in Fort McMurray? It could be. But mostly they're out there because they can't get jobs here. That's what it is.

Look, Speaker, we have been downgraded as a province. We've been downgraded by Moody's—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order. I would ask the members to come to order.

The member for Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Thank you. We, as a province, have been downgraded by Moody's. We've been downgraded by S&P. We've lost 300,000 high-paying manufacturing jobs, and we have seen many companies pack up and leave—very recently, as a matter of fact, a couple more.

Our province, at this point, has almost 600,000 people who are looking for work—600,000 of our brothers and sisters who want to work and haven't been able to find a job. As I said, very recently we have some examples. Just this past weekend, it was announced that more good manufacturing jobs were lost; 330 Caterpillar workers in Toronto will be receiving severance packages. That comes after 500 jobs were lost at that same company's plant in London last year.

Instead of taking necessary action, what did our Premier, Kathleen Wynne, do? She used the 2013 provincial budget to take us on the same failed Dalton McGuinty approach as the last decade.

It is now clear that the only way to help Ontario become strong again is to set a new course with a new team. It's time, Ontario. It is time.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** We have a new government.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** You know what? They don't. I want to say they don't have a new government. They have a new Premier with a team that has not even begun to jell. That's not a new government. That is a recycled old government, and let that be understood. I might say, Speaker, it's quite a shame that the new government which was touted as a new government by that very same Premier when she came in here and talked about collaboration has not come across as a new government. It's come across as a recycled one with a new Premier who has no mandate to govern because she hasn't gone to the polls.

I see little to no input was actually taken into account when looking at the recommendations that we heard at the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs on what the minister tabled on May 2—that's last Thursday. As far as I can see, from his own exclusive and private consultations he probably hasn't taken much into consideration either.

This bill, Bill 65, is called the Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** They're applauding. Last year, it was called "strong measures for Ontario." They have an incredible proclivity for picking titles. I've noticed this in the titles of their bills.

They said they were going to use strong measures last year. The strong measures that come to mind immediately were they were going to deal with their unions' 4,000 collective agreements, to create 0% wage increases. They didn't need to freeze wages, which was something that our party was in favour of. In fact, it's the subject of a bill I presented, and it's something that our party is still in favour of, not because we're interested in union-busting, but because we think a fair and level playing field is the appropriate way to go. They said they weren't going to do that. They were going to talk to their partners and they were going to get it done. The first example of that: They go to the teachers and bring Bill 115 to the floor of this Legislature. We said, "Well, it's not the best bill there ever was, but it's something that we could support because it at least goes partway towards the goal that we have." Along comes the new government, and the new government takes Bill 115 and, for all intents and purposes, it's out the window. Okay? That was strong measures.

They brought in, at least, some passing reference to a change in interest arbitration—the ability for towns and cities, for example, to deal with their employees through an arbitration process that had some teeth and worked. Guess what? The NDP, who they were trying to co-operate with to get their support last year, gutted that and the Liberals went along.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** You voted against it.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** You're quite correct. We voted against it, but for an entirely different reason. We voted against it because they gutted it. So for two different reasons, at cross purposes, we voted against it—it wasn't going to go along. We could have voted with the government. It wouldn't have provided any teeth anyway.

1740

We also saw measures in that strong measures budget that looked at the privatization of some government services. The NDP gutted that. It wouldn't vote along with it. We even voted for that piece of it, the privatization piece, but they haven't done anything with it. Those were the strong measures; I guess they're gone.

If history informs the past, I've got to say that strong measures never occurred as a result of that budget, any more than a prosperous and fair Ontario is going to occur as a result of this budget.

This budget is basically unfair to the dozens of deputants who were heard before SCOFEA, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. We heard from them all across the province. We travelled to Ottawa. We travelled to Timmins. We travelled to Windsor. We travelled to Thunder Bay. We heard from a couple of hundred different deputants from all aspects of society. Let me put some things on the record, if I can find them. They're here somewhere. Well, I will find them. How's that? I did.

Chemistry Industry Association of Canada: They said, "We take raw resources and we produce useable products. We are a \$16-billion industry in total." This is a supply industry for other sectors, so it drives other economic activity. We're talking about development in Ontario. There has to be a clear plan to reduce the deficit and debt so that it consumes a smaller portion of the offset.

Interest rates are at risk. Ontario could be faced with continued deficits and growing debt. It could be a lose-lose-lose scenario for the province. There is a correlation between deficit and job losses. The corporate tax rate is an issue.

That was the chemistry industry. That's a large industry; \$16 billion is an awful lot of money.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Sarnia.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Sarnia: That's right. My friend from Sarnia points out that it affects his area.

Here was a completely different presentation. These were two young guys, really brilliant, from the Ontario Economic Development Society. They were looking for funding to promote a business they've already started, that already has achieved a modicum of success, and it was for social media funding. They said that Ontario has to take action on business creation. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce were on board with this idea—they presented in Ottawa. They said that they need a better environment to access capital.

What they wanted us to do was legalize crowd funding. Some people who are watching us and who are in this chamber, some people on the outside, will understand what crowd funding is. It is already a fact of life in other jurisdictions. But it has to have registration with the OSC. They have kickstarter.com online right now, \$159 million raised for entrepreneurs. That's a crowd funding site. We have to get on board with that in Ontario.

Again, that was a great idea that came from some people who came before SCOFEA. I see none of that stuff appearing in the budget.

Here is the Timmins Economic Development Corp. This is basically municipal government, or an adjunct to municipal government. They're saying that they want to see land-based gaming and modernization. They were disappointed that Timmins was not selected to host a casino—a willing host community that has a central location for the surrounding region of the north. What they're talking about is because Xstrata relocated, they lost \$3.4 million in revenue and 678 direct jobs, and they have a large visitor base to sustain a small casino for the north.

They said that they would like to be considered for that, and they also said something we heard an awful lot in the north. I'll read some more of these later, but the price of electricity, they said, is too high, and government is directly controlling the standard of living in the province.

These are things, amongst others, that came forward as the committee travelled the province, and these are the things that we haven't seen addressed to any reasonable degree by this government in this budget. Regrettably, the many and varied first-hand consultations at those hearings were not taken into account in any of the development of this budget, as far as we can see. This budget is unfair to the hard-working people of this province because basically, what you've done is you've denied them hope. That's what it is: It's about hope. If you're going to put together a budget and you're going to put people back to work, you have to give them some hope. You haven't done that. You've made concessions, basically, to a socialist party on my left in a bid to stay in power. That's what you did. If you take a look at the budget bill that we're debating and you compare it to other budget bills—every budget bill I've seen in the past, the one last year—they were that thick. People on camera can see it. This year it's that thick. Why is that the case, Speaker? Because they don't want that kind of debate going on.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** You can holler all you want, but—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** It's quality that matters.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I'd ask you—first of all, you're not in your own seat. Second of all, you do not have the right to talk to the person across. You talk through the Chair. Is that clear?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I apologize.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you.

The member for Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Anyway, Speaker, it is quite clear to me what has been done by the Liberals with the budget bill itself. There's a common trend with the Liberal Party at this point that what it does—and it does this not just in a budget bill, but it does it in many bills—is they talk about grandiose ideas, and then they do



nothing to show that there's any accountability for delivering on those ideas.

Accountability is not there for a very simple reason: It's because you aren't accountable. You aren't. You don't hold yourself accountable. You don't take responsibility.

Look, I'll give a perfect example to the people watching us. We must have asked—and we haven't kept count; well, maybe somebody's kept count—dozens and dozens of times whether or not the Premier of this province apologizes for her complicit involvement in the cancellation of a couple of power plants. She keeps standing up and saying, "I have said, Speaker, I regret that this happened." Well, I'm going to tell you something, Speaker: So do I. I regret it. Regretting is not being sorry. I regret that that party did what it did. So does Kathleen Wynne, the Premier. But she's supposed to say, "I apologize. I'm sorry. I used your money, taxpayers, to do this." I didn't do that; she did. Dalton McGuinty did. But here we are. Here we are, Speaker, I regret.

The numbers don't lie. The minister—and these are numbers from his own document, on page 109 of that document. The numbers are as follows, so let's just make sure that we put them on the record: In 2010, the deficit was \$14 billion. I'll say it again for the benefit of the Attorney General.

**Interjection:** He's flipping pages.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** He's flipping pages. It's page 109.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I've read the document.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** So have I.

Page 109: 2010 deficit, \$14 billion; 2011 deficit, \$13 billion; 2012, a deficit of \$9.8 billion—that's the one that you applauded the other day. That's the one from the year just over, and that's the one that I said earlier is contrived. It's contrived because of one-time revenue and the movement of reserves. Otherwise, it would have been larger.

How can I make the proof point for that? By saying that in 2013—the budget that's just been tabled—the increased deficit is \$11.7 billion. This is a government that says that about four years out, 2017-18, it's going to deliver zero on the bottom line. That would be a good thing if it could, because that's called a balanced budget. But we've also proven in debate yesterday that they can't. They can't because there's no change in expenses for the four years leading up to 2017-18. They have no intention of raising or lowering expenses. It's just going to be sitting there at \$118 billion.

So between 2010 and 2012—if I can go back to the figures I've just mentioned—revenue actually increased by \$7 billion despite the fact that the deficit decreased by only \$4.2 billion. They did, in that period of time, what they're still doing now: They increased spending every single year in excess. They never really presented anything of an austerity budget, and we weren't looking for an austerity budget. What we were looking for was for them to actually keep spending in check. But they didn't, and they're still not. That's why I'm standing up

here and decrying the fact that we're not moving out of the same sphere that they've operated in for all those years.

That's some pretty fancy accounting, if you ask me. I guess it really begins to explain the budget bill, this bill about a future full of prosperity. Budget bills usually are what I described before: They're huge omnibus bills—acts within acts and clauses within clauses that take incredible amounts of debate during the period in committee after second reading before they finally come back to third. They contain dozens of schedules to clearly demonstrate to not only the opposition parties but, more importantly, the people of Ontario how the government plans on spending their hard-earned tax dollars in the coming year.

So, once again, accountability seems to be some fictitious concept to the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals.

**1750**

Accountability in government is everything. The reason why people on the outside right now have not a lot of faith in politicians generally—I have to say it—is because they look at us and they judge us by the people who have been elected for a lengthy period of time to run what's going on. They say, "My God, if they can do that, won't you all?"

Speaker, I went canvassing over the weekend. I wanted to take the temperature in the riding of Thornhill. I got people at the door. I purposely picked an area of my constituency that was not particularly blue; it was more pink, more red the last time around. Hundreds—actually hundreds; I had a big team.

We got a sense that there's a turn. In areas where we knew by our walk sheets that people had voted for the other party the last time, in 2011, we saw a move to our party or to, at the very least, "undecided." We got a very good feeling from that in terms of my re-electability, and that's all we were really testing. It's not scientific.

But what we heard is even more important. We heard from people who wanted to engage us, that they were really disgusted with the nonsense that has gone on of late. They know about Ornge, and they know about eHealth. They even go back to, "We won't raise your taxes" and then getting something that wasn't a tax after all; it was called a health premium that never then and never since has been spent on health. And now they know about buying off two companies that were building power plants that had to be cancelled.

The House leader for the government stands up every day in question period and he says, "Those parties wanted to cancel the power plants too." No, those parties wanted to react, as they did, to what was going on in those constituencies in terms of dealing with what people wanted.

But here's what the parties on this side didn't do: We didn't try to hide the cost of what it would be if we had gone ahead and done it, and that's what they never admit to. It's not a question of having cancelled the power plants. It's the motive at the time, and it's the costs being hidden at the time and for many, many months after-

wards, that required incredible sleuthing on the part of this party, and that, again, goes to accountability.

So let me get back directly to the budget. With such a thin budget bill, I have to ask how the Liberals intend on actually enacting anything that was promised in the budget. Very proudly, said the minister, you will hold spending to 1.5%. It's right there in black and white, again on page 109 of your budget. Yet there is no indication whatsoever anywhere in that book of how you plan on doing that in this bill. So where's the accountability there?

The Premier has stood up in this House, saying that there is—I'm not quite quoting, but I'm paraphrasing—no money for much-needed projects: funding for autism, better social services throughout the province.

I myself stood up during the debate of the supply motion—it must be a month ago, six weeks ago—and I talked about a woman in my riding, Laura Kirby-McIntosh, who has a son who is severely autistic and with whom she has a problem, and he's 14. It was only because I stood up and spoke in this House that the CCAC immediately came to the fore and handed her some temporary relief. But other than that, she couldn't be heard. Is that what it takes—for an MPP to stand up in the House in debate and actually say something—in order for one person to get help?

I think we all know of the tragedy last week in Ottawa, where a mom had to take her 19-year-old autistic son and literally give him away, because she was at the end of her tether. How can we countenance this in the province of Ontario? How is it possible that this can be even happening in our midst?

Yet these people on the other side, who claim to be accountable, can be spending like drunken sailors. The 2013 revenue is \$116 billion. That is up \$2.6 billion from the previous year. Expenses are increasing by \$3.6 billion, to \$127.6 billion, hence the accusation—because it's true, by your own admission—that you continue to spend in larger degree than what you take in, and you continue to generate deficits that are larger than the year before. That is what you term “controlled spending.” It's not. There's nothing controlled about it. It's just spending. But it's what you do; it's in your DNA. And that, Speaker, is why this party made a conscious decision, and I think a very principled decision, not to support the government.

It's not about a budget anymore. It's about a way of life, and that way of life has to stop in Ontario, because if it doesn't stop in Ontario, even people with a plan—that's us—are going to have a really hard time taking over government and fixing anything. That represents a clear and present danger to everybody who lives in Ontario.

Right now, there are a bunch of people sitting here in this House—I think the youngest one is in his 30s, probably; if Monte Kwinter were here, he'd be in his 80s, but the point is, it represents a range of age groups. We're not in a position at our age to fix this anymore, so

who's going to fix it? Our kids are going to fix it. Our grandkids are going to. Somebody is going to have to.

This is kind of like if you have a credit card and you keep a balance on it—you keep it maxed out—until one day, when you finally leave this Earth, as we all are absolutely going to do, somebody has still got to pay that debt. Who's going to do it? Your estate, if you have one, but I suspect that if you have a credit card with 10 or 20 grand on it, you haven't got much of an estate, so it's going to be your kid. That's what's going to happen in the province of Ontario on a grand scale.

Correct me if I'm wrong, Minister, but how are you paying for programs that you say you're providing when you aren't taking in the money to cover those programs? I notice in the budget bill that one clause calls for the creation of the ability to borrow up to \$24.4 billion. That would be described, if we were in committee or if we were asking a question on the floor of this House, as business in the normal course; government has to have an ability to pay its bills, so they need a credit line capable of paying up to \$24.4 billion.

I said to myself, “Gee, I wonder why that's there,” and then I realized—I'm the finance critic; I've got this figured out—that they have a deficit projected of \$12 billion, and there's probably \$12 billion out there that they haven't collected in taxes, so they figure that maybe, at the max, they're going to need \$24 billion in a credit line to operate in the coming year. Doesn't that worry you a little bit?

It worries me, because I don't know if \$24 billion is enough, the way these people go. They never manage to keep the spending in check, so if they say they're going to spend \$3.6 billion, my guess is that they'll probably spend \$5 billion or \$6 billion.

How is it that there was always money to save Liberal interests, but when real, urgent programs are required, the money runs out? We don't know the final answer to what happened in Oakville, and we're not going to get that until sometime in the summer. That could be \$600 million or \$700 million; maybe it's \$1 billion, and we're going to find that out. But whatever it was, that money was there, as was, per the Auditor General, \$275 million to stop the construction out in Mississauga, and as was \$1 billion to take care of a bunch of friends who were going to build us an eHealth system. I haven't seen that eHealth system—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Your doctor has one—

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** My doctor put in his own eHealth system, but I haven't seen an eHealth system that comes from the province of Ontario.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I would just ask the member to take his seat.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** A point of order. Yes?



**Mr. Ted Arnott:** A point of order: I need to correct my record, Madam Speaker.

On May 2, during question period, I told the House that I'd raised the issue of the need to provide funding approval for Kalydeco, a new medication for cystic fibrosis patients, during debate on March 26. I should have said I'd raised it during debate on March 28, which

was the correct date. I apologize for this mistake and accept full responsibility for it. I wish to correct the Hansard record with the correct date.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** This being close to 6 p.m., this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York-Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga-Erindale	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor-Tecumseh	



**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉ S PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day (pro tem.)

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

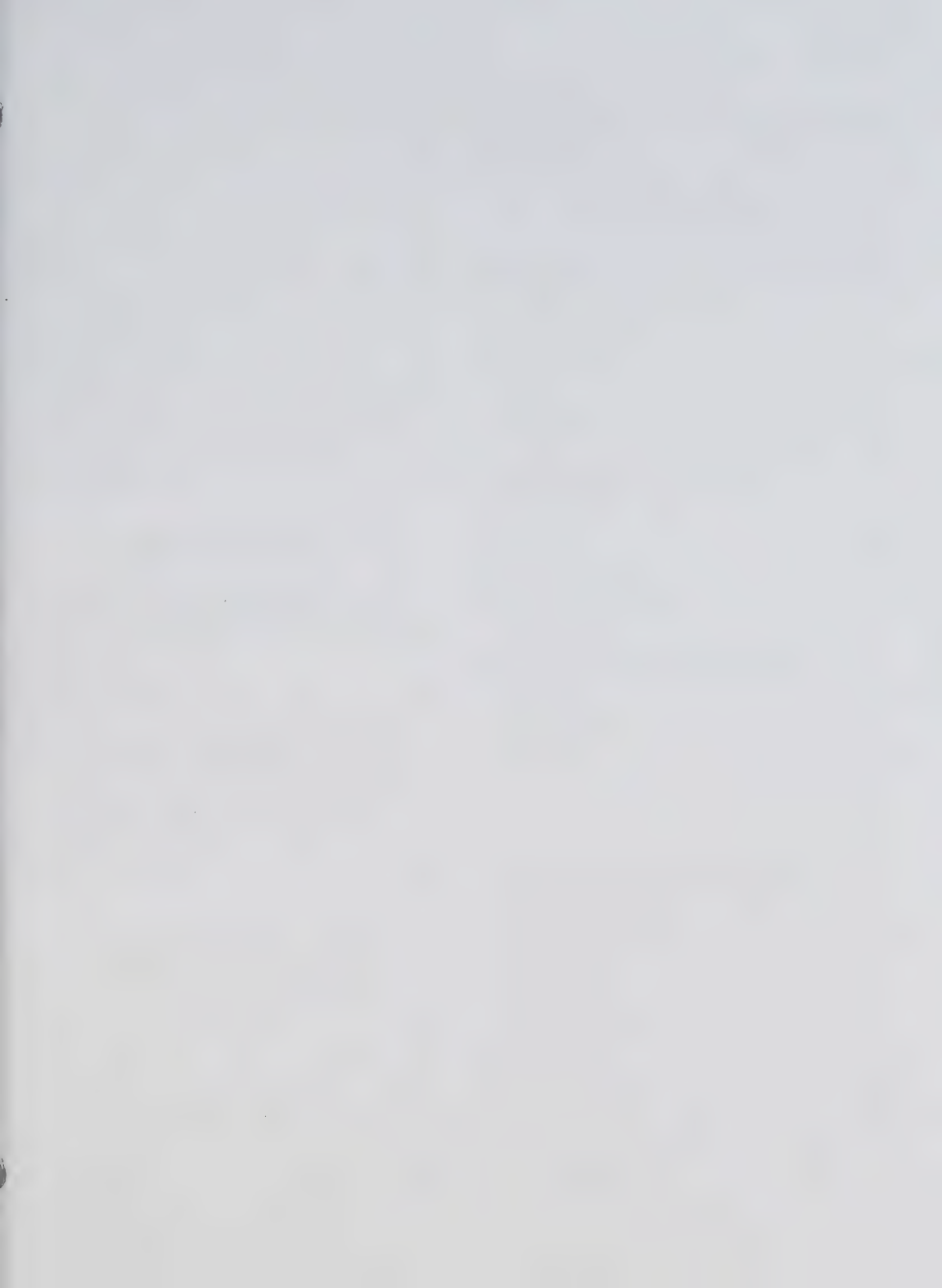
Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margaret R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short







Continued from back cover

**Mother's Day**  
Miss Monique Taylor ..... 1828

**Concours Actifs et fiers**  
M. Phil McNeely ..... 1829

**Acton Town Hall**  
Mr. Ted Arnott ..... 1829

**Nurses**  
Ms. Soo Wong ..... 1829

**Asian Heritage Month**  
Mr. Michael Harris ..... 1829

**Physiotherapy services**  
Mme France G  linas ..... 1830

**Myalgic Encephalomyelitis Association of Ontario**  
Mr. Joe Dickson ..... 1830

**Wasaga Beach Lions and Lioness Clubs**  
Mr. Jim Wilson ..... 1830

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /  
D  P  T DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Unlawfully Possessed Handguns in Vehicles Act,  
2013, Bill 66, Mr. Colle / Loi de 2013 sur les armes  
de poing ill  gales dans les v  hicules, projet de loi  
66, M. Colle**  
First reading agreed to ..... 1831  
Mr. Mike Colle ..... 1831

**Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act  
(Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), 2013, Bill 67,  
Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2013 modifiant la Loi sur la  
s  curit   professionnelle et l'assurance contre les  
accidents du travail (trouble de stress post-  
traumatique), projet de loi 67, Mme DiNovo**  
First reading agreed to ..... 1831  
Ms. Cheri DiNovo ..... 1831

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES / D  CLARATIONS  
MINIST  RIELLES ET R  PONSES**

**Children's Mental Health Week**  
Hon. Teresa Piruzza ..... 1831

**Nursing Week**  
Hon. Deborah Matthews ..... 1832

**Children's Mental Health Week**  
Mr. Rod Jackson ..... 1833

**Nursing Week**  
Mr. Bill Walker ..... 1834

**Children's Mental Health Week**  
Miss Monique Taylor ..... 1834

**Nursing Week**  
Mme France G  linas ..... 1835

**PETITIONS / P  TITIONS**

**Wind turbines**  
Mr. John O'Toole ..... 1835

**Long-term care**  
Mme France G  linas ..... 1835

**Electoral boundaries**  
Ms. Soo Wong ..... 1835

**Air quality**  
Ms. Sylvia Jones ..... 1836

**Hydro rates**  
Ms. Sarah Campbell ..... 1836

**Hospital funding**  
Mr. Joe Dickson ..... 1836

**Hydro rates**  
Mr. Steve Clark ..... 1836

**Hospital services**  
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong ..... 1837

**Diagnostic services**  
Mr. Todd Smith ..... 1837

**Services for the developmentally disabled**  
Ms. Cheri DiNovo ..... 1837

**Wind turbines**  
Mr. Jim McDonnell ..... 1838

**Wind turbines**  
Ms. Laurie Scott ..... 1838

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

**Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act (Budget  
Measures), 2013, Bill 65, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2013  
pour un Ontario prosp  re et   quitable (mesures  
budg  taires), projet de loi 65, M. Sousa**  
Hon. John Gerretsen ..... 1838  
Mr. Steven Del Duca ..... 1840  
Mr. Steve Clark ..... 1848  
Mr. John Vanthof ..... 1849  
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn ..... 1849  
Mr. Todd Smith ..... 1849  
Mr. Steven Del Duca ..... 1850  
Mr. Peter Shurman ..... 1850  
Second reading debate deemed adjourned ..... 1857

**Correction of record**  
Mr. Ted Arnott ..... 1857



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 7 May 2013 / Mardi 7 mai 2013

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### 2013 Ontario budget

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1813
Debate adjourned .....	1815

### Wearing of ribbons

Mr. Joe Dickson.....	1815
Hon. Teresa Piruzza .....	1815

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	1815
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1815
Mr. Steve Clark.....	1816
Mr. Kim Craitor .....	1816
Hon. David Zimmer .....	1816
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	1816
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	1816
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1816
Hon. Michael Gravelle.....	1816
Mme France Gélinas .....	1816

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Power plants

Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	1817
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1817

### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1818
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1818
Hon. John Milloy .....	1818

### Power plants

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1819
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1819
Hon. John Milloy .....	1819

### Power plants

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1820
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1820

### Power plants

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	1821
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1821
Hon. John Milloy .....	1821

### Power plants

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	1821
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	1822
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	1822

### Transportation

Ms. Dipika Damerla .....	1822
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	1822

### Government's record

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	1823
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	1823
Hon. John Milloy .....	1823

### Cancer treatment

Mme France Gélinas .....	1823
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	1824

### Arts and cultural funding

Ms. Soo Wong.....	1824
Hon. Michael Chan .....	1824

### Manufacturing jobs

Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	1824
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	1825

### Casinos

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	1825
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	1825

### Children's mental health services

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	1826
Hon. Teresa Piruzza .....	1826

### Low water levels

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	1826
Hon. David Oraziatti .....	1827
Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	1827

### Tenant protection

Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1827
Hon. Linda Jeffrey.....	1827

### Visitor

Hon. Michael Coteau.....	1828
--------------------------	------

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Joe Dickson .....	1828
Hon. Teresa Piruzza .....	1828
Mme France Gélinas .....	1828

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Brockville Collegiate Institute

Mr. Steve Clark .....	1828
-----------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*

No. 38



N° 38

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 40<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 8 May 2013**

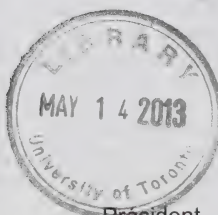
**Mercredi 8 mai 2013**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

President  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller





### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 8 May 2013

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 8 mai 2013

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### NON-PROFIT HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2013 LOI DE 2013 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 1, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 14, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Good morning. I'm happy to speak to Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

I think all of us in this House can agree that the cost of living has risen much too quickly for Ontario families over the last 10 years. In fact, I've heard from my constituents in the riding of Kitchener-Conestoga who tell me that life under the Liberal government has become completely unaffordable. We know that far too many tenant households in Ontario are stretched to the limit trying to pay their bills, including their rent.

Despite this worsening situation, the Premier and her Liberal cabinet and caucus continue to allow skyrocketing hydro rates that eat away at what little disposable income these households, in fact, have left at the end of the month. Ironically, the Liberal government continues to pride itself on standing up for tenants, yet its own failed policies, like the feed-in tariff program, continue to increase the cost of living for those who can least afford it.

Now, more Ontarians are turning to affordable housing as their only option to make ends meet. Affordable community housing gives individuals and their families with low- to moderate-income households an opportunity to rent a housing unit at a lower cost. In fact, the region of Waterloo owns and operates more than 2,700 affordable rental units in Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot townships.

According to the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, there were more than 152,000 households on municipal waiting lists for assisted housing as early as 2011. That number was up by nearly 10,500 households from 2010, an increase of 7.4% in one year.

Closer to my home in Waterloo region there are 3,000 individuals and families currently waiting to move into an affordable home. And the wait, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, is long. According to Waterloo Region Housing, seniors can wait up to two years to move into an affordable home, while families typically wait six months to four years, and individuals wait four to six years. This reality puts a real strain on families already going through tough times.

With tough economic times, co-op housing helps Ontarians to find a suitable home to raise a family and build a safe community with other tenants. Co-op housing is different from a typical landlord-tenant relationship. They have rules and policies that are uniquely set out in their bylaws. For example, co-op members determine how funds are spent, determine the cost of rent for tenants and write the rules of conduct for the co-op.

When disputes arise between tenants and their board members with regard to missed rent payments, late rent payments or behavioural problems affecting other tenants, this has great ramifications. For example, in my riding of Kitchener-Conestoga, a housing co-op called Sand Hills is going through an expensive court dispute between its tenants and its board members. Tenants are being told that they have outstanding rent payments, but their board members cannot provide documentation to prove it. On top of that, residents feel that their homes are not being repaired as they should and feel unsafe in their own homes because of it. Since the region of Waterloo oversees the co-op's management, they ruled to eject the board immediately until the matter is settled in court.

You can only imagine how stressful this must be on families, but the problems continue. Without the co-op's approval, board members used up to \$15,000 of the co-op's fund to pay for a lawyer to represent them in court with the dispute with the region. This is greatly affecting



families in the co-op, using money that could have been spent on house repairs and other necessities.

Speaker, this bill, when it was Bill 65, could have resolved this issue much more quickly at a lower cost, with fewer negative consequences. Unfortunately, though, it did on the order paper when the Liberals decided to cynically prorogue this House and spend their efforts and their time electing a new Premier. Sand Hills is just one example of a co-op dispute that could have been avoided, but I'm sure that there are hundreds more across the entire province, costing people—families—their hard-earned dollars. If this bill was passed last fall, then the disputes resolution process could have been streamlined, and hearings like this one would have gone before the Landlord and Tenant Board rather than being placed in a long queue of court cases.

Yesterday, the former Premier, Dalton McGuinty, was back at Queen's Park to appear as a witness in the justice committee for the cancellation of the gas plants. I wonder if he felt that legislation was moving forward in the House any better than before he left, and if prorogation was in fact actually necessary. I know my colleague from Nipissing questioned him on that several times—some-what got an evasive answer, but anyways. I bet, though, if he looked at the order paper today and read all the bills that were being debated for the second time, he would see how drastic his decision was to lock the doors of this House and prevent us from debating important legislation like this, especially when this bill had support from all three parties.

Clearly with the cancellation of the two power plants—costing about a half a billion dollars of taxpayers' money and growing each and every day—the lavish spending over at eHealth and the scandals at Ornge, this government has more problems than it in fact can handle.

You know, you would think that in the consultation process to develop this bill, the Liberals would have met with residents in co-op homes. These families know what it takes to push a dollar as far as it can go in order to pay for the cost of living. Clearly the Liberals didn't learn this lesson in their consultations with these families because they continue to spend, spend, spend without any knowledge of the actual cost of their government.

But this morning I'm here to help speak to this legislation, this important legislation, that will actually reduce the cost of living on hard-working Ontarians. Bill 14 will reduce the backlog of court disputes by amending the Residential Tenancies Act and the Co-operative Corporations Act to move most co-op tenant dispute cases from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board. It also strives to streamline the internal dispute resolution process in non-profit co-ops so the Landlord and Tenant Board will deal with rent disputes and behavioural problems. This amendment will allow for disputes to be settled a lot quicker and at a cheaper cost to residents so that they can focus on getting back on their feet and providing for their families.

In my community, the region of Waterloo, there are many co-ops, and I've had an opportunity to meet with

many of them that have come in and talked about how this bill, although we would have preferred it to have been passed last legislative sitting, will actually help families that live in co-ops move forward.

#### 0910

With what little time I have left, I want to talk briefly about some of the changes that were made. Obviously, this new bill contains an amendment to allow the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive that \$45 filing fee. There were a few additional things incorporated from the last bill, or changes that were made. You know what? We'll look forward to continuing the discussion about this important matter.

I was slated to speak to this bill last fall but I didn't get that opportunity. Today, I obviously will have had that opportunity. I wanted to speak to some of the situations that have arisen in my community, such as the Sand Hills dispute. But I know this bill will eventually move forward and we'll get it into committee and make some of those other changes we have spoken about over the course of this debate. I'll leave it at that and look forward to engaging in further discussion on this one.

You know what? I would have liked to have had the opportunity yesterday to speak to Premier Dalton McGuinty, to actually ask his opinion.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I've got one more minute left. I'm going to have an opportunity to talk further about this bill—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Order, the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** —but I would have liked to ask Dalton McGuinty yesterday what he thought about the fact that these bills are now back. It's like Groundhog Day—all over again. I would have liked to have asked him what he felt about that. I know he said his mother was watching. I would have liked to have asked her what she feels about the impact that his cynical decision to prorogue the Legislature last fall is having on communities across Ontario, including those who live in co-op housing.

I'll leave it at that. I look forward to members' comments on this bill and will wrap up in the last two minutes I have. Thanks so much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'd like to welcome again the co-ops this morning. Welcome, Harvey Cooper and his teammates for enduring this process and putting up with the continued debate on this matter.

I'd just like to say I was at one of my co-ops this weekend, Stoneworth. What a great co-op; they're doing amazing things. I know they're looking forward to this bill being passed. Hopefully, we can get that done shortly.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** This bill has been debated now for 15 hours. Everybody agrees. Stop your filibustering.

Let's get on with second reading and let's send it to committee. Stop filibustering.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak for two minutes on this. I look forward to my time here.

I too want to welcome our guests back. I know you're here to continue to hear the good things we have to say about this bill. Our party will continue to say good things about this bill. It's the opportunity to chat.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** That is, you'll continue to filibuster.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** As I said the last time I spoke on this—if I can have the floor, thank you—I spoke about the time that my wife, Patty, and I—I'm sorry. I'd like the floor for just one moment, if you don't mind.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I didn't even open my mouth.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I would like the member to sit down. You already said it once to the minister. I think she got the message. You didn't have to repeat it. You may now continue.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. I would like the time to be able to talk about the visit that my wife, Patty, and I shared at the housing co-op in North Bay during the last election.

I still can't hear myself think, Speaker. I apologize, but it's very difficult when you can't—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You might want to sit down for a second. If you have trouble hearing with that amount of noise, can you imagine what I go through every day? I'm sorry, but it's not that loud that it requires any effort here.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you, Speaker. I do find it annoying.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Just deal with the issue. I'm sorry you feel it's annoying. Deal with the issue.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My issue is that my wife, Patty, and I did enjoy our tour of the co-op. I would highly encourage all members from all parties to visit their co-op housing projects and communities. These are absolutely wonderful communities within each and every municipality that has them. It's a real opportunity to understand, to fully understand, the important role that co-op housing plays in your local community. So I would highly encourage every MPP to get out of this Legislature and get down into the communities and visit one of these valuable housing co-operatives.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Welcome back, to those who represent co-ops. I am a mother and Mother's Day is coming up. There are many mothers in this chamber and there are many mothers who live in co-ops. On behalf of all mothers, I appeal to my friends in the Progressive Conservative Party to maybe keep the debate short. Let's get this to committee. Let's get it passed so that these mothers can stay in their homes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I would just like you to know that the people of Guelph support this bill—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm sorry, Minister. That was the fourth—the table just alerted me.

The member from Kitchener—Conestoga has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I too would like to welcome our guests today from the co-op rental housing group to continue to hear the debate that is happening. Do you know what? The member just mentioned Mother's Day coming up. I had an opportunity to actually give my mother a call this morning and speak to her. She is in fact from Guelph and lives in Guelph. I'll be looking forward to of course giving her another call on Sunday.

I want to just follow up on some of the comments made by the Attorney General. You know what? I hope he was as discouraged and as vocal in cabinet last year, when the Premier cynically prorogued the House, as he is today with members who didn't get an opportunity to actually speak to this bill last year. I hope that he pounded the table and screamed and yelled, as he is today, when the Premier made that cynical decision to prorogue the Legislature and kill important legislation that we're now re-debating this session. I hope he was as discouraged as he is this morning with his former Premier on that cynical attempt to prorogue the Legislature, to simply kill any further discussion on power plants and you name it that we're now hearing about today.

I just want to talk quickly, in the last 30 seconds, about the one item that in fact was changed. That's the one-sided amendment to the LTB that would consider, without widespread consultation—landlords were upset, justifiably fearing that the door will be open to disgruntled tenants to take over every minor dispute. You know what? We need to stress that these nuisance hearings that they've now incorporated will only cause further delays in the already backlogged LTB system. This is bad news for landlords and it's bad news for tenants who actually have legitimate cases before the board that they need resolved in a timely manner.

Speaker, with that, I appreciate the time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I too am very pleased to join this debate today for Bill 14, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. I'm really pleased to see this bill come back here to the House. I actually was very disappointed when we prorogued and this bill fell off the table last fall, because quite frankly I'm always pleased to have an opportunity to speak about co-operatives.

Prior to October 6, 2011, I was actually general manager of the Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative. I appreciate and thank the leadership from the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada for being here throughout all this



debate. It's a special mindset that embraces co-operativeness. I have to tell you, the village that I'm from, Teeswater, Ontario—we actually exist because of four co-operatives. We have the Huron Bay Co-operative, the Gay Lea Foods Co-operative, the Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative, and we have our own grocery store because people pulled together, after two years without a local grocery store, to chip in some dollars, so we are very proud to have our own grocery store on our main street. Otherwise, it would be gone. So I really, truly appreciate the whole essence behind co-operativeness and that's why I really look forward to the opportunity to speak to this bill.

Specifically, Bill 14 is intended to help people who are having a tough time. That's one thing about the Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative: It didn't matter whether you were milking 1,000 goats or 200 goats; you all pooled your milk together to make a difference and to make life a little bit easier. That's what we want to provide and see through Bill 14 as well. We want to provide people who are having a tough time with non-profit co-operative housing, and we want to look after them in a fair and responsible way. That's the thing: Everyone is equal in this particular essence. I think it's an obligation as a society that we continue to support this type of initiative.

0920

The intention of this bill is to streamline the system of solving problems and disputes, and we support that. There has been significant cost in going to court, as opposed to going to the Landlord and Tenant Board to solve these problems. It would seem that going to the Landlord and Tenant Board to solve these problems is a logical thing to do. It gives the opportunity to take disputes between landlords and tenants to this board, as opposed to running them through the courts.

Anyone who has ever been in the court system knows it is not cheap and sometimes is very unproductive. It is estimated that the cost of—

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Like proroguing.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Like proroguing, absolutely.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Very unproductive.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Yes, unproductive, just like proroguing, as my friend from Kitchener—Conestoga mentioned.

In terms of being costly, it's estimated that the cost of resolving these co-op disputes in courts runs between \$3,000 and \$5,000 each. We want to see these types of things get out of the courts so that other, more pressing issues can be there. There is our alternative: Get it to the Landlord and Tenant Board. That's the alternative we have to consider, but we have to do it with a balance. It needs to be a fair, balanced process for both sides—the landlords as well as the tenants. It needs to ensure that there's no frivolousness or nuisance stuff being able to actually backlog the issues.

Speaking about backlogging, we have so much to talk about with regard to this bill and other bills that we see coming through this House. Because of prorogation, so much fell off the table. We have a huge backlog. But we

in the PC caucus take our job very seriously, and we want to represent our constituents and the issues, and that's why we're taking time to speak to each and every bill.

Back to Bill 14: There's never an opportunity to do better—outside of Bill 14. To do better is to make life easier, to make life a little bit more streamlined so that the people in co-operative housing can find a better way. We have a problem right now that costs co-op members millions of dollars in unnecessary legal costs every year. That isn't the better way; it's not a fairer way. It costs millions of dollars, and we also, as I said, clog up the court system, which costs all Ontarians time and money. Yet it goes on and on, millions add up, and the court dockets just get more backlogged.

These disputes includes rent arrears, late payment of rent, wilful damage, illegal activity by tenants, interfering with other tenants' enjoyment of their property. These cases don't belong in court. They belong in front of the Landlord and Tenant Board. Let's streamline this and make life easier.

Roughly 125,000 people live in more than 550 not-for-profit housing co-operatives across Ontario. There are co-ops in 95 of the province's 107 ridings. With co-operatives in so many ridings, Speaker, clearly this is not just a specific urban issue. It impacts constituencies and ridings right across this wonderful province.

When I think about affordable housing and the people who are struggling to find it, because it's not easy, I have to think about how much we could do in terms of being better and how much more we could put into affordable housing if we didn't have all the scandals. Unfortunately, today I read a headline that really is disturbing. According to the headlines today, for the Liberal government, scandal is the new normal. Well, let me tell you, that is not acceptable in the Ontario that I am proud—

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** My point of order is that the member should be speaking about the bill, as she well knows the rules of the House, and I would ask you to instruct her to do so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you for your point of order. I was getting close. She was wandering a bit. I gave her a little latitude, but if she wanders any further she will be getting a warning. Thank you.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Duly noted, Mr. Speaker.

Again, we could do so much more with dollars that, unfortunately, are being thrown out the window with scandal after scandal after scandal—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** All right. You had your latitude. Now you stick to the issue. Thank you.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** As I said, Speaker, if we had the dollars to afford co-operative housing in the manner it should be treated, we would have so many more opportunities to have affordable housing units, to have more long-term-care beds, more home care, more special

education teachers. I could go on for days and days, but I don't want to digress, because speaking about affordable housing is so, so important. That's why we have to address this through our debate on Bill 14. We don't want to see this file mismanaged like so many other files that have been by this Liberal government.

Specifically, in my riding of Huron-Bruce, in my Blyth and Kincardine constituency offices, I hear from people who are struggling to pay their own housing, their own utilities, and it's becoming harder and harder under this government. My office hears from people struggling to pay for their basic needs—home heating, auto insurance, healthy food, just as a few examples. These are expenses that families cannot avoid. They're basic necessities which need to be paid, and we can no longer see a government squander our hard-earned dollars away through issue after issue after issue. You know what I mean, Speaker.

We know that's the problem faced by those folks who actually need a place to call home, a safe place such as that that over 140,000 Ontarians are waiting to call home. We have a waiting list with over 140,000 Ontarians waiting for co-operative housing. Again, we have to stop the squandering, we have to stop the waste and we need to be able to support co-operative housing in the manner which it deserves.

Thirty-two per cent of tenants have accommodations that fail to meet standards of adequacy, suitability and affordability. This is all wrong. And the loss of the industrial sector, with over 600,000 Ontario men and women out of work, might cause that waiting list to grow.

Speaker, Ontario's in dire straits and we need a party that will address the tough issues and address what's right for Ontarians, as opposed to squandering our hard-earned tax dollars away.

We know that too many Ontarians—1.31 million tenant households—are stretched to the limit trying to pay their household bills, including their rent. We know that some 20% of these households spend more than 50% of their income on rent, while 32% are in core need, meaning their current accommodation fails to meet standards. And you know what? Under this current government, I worry about the standards that we have come to value in Ontario. Our standards across the board, be it the manner in which government conducts itself, be it the manner in which people should assume they can have a roof over their head, are spiralling downwards. We need to put a stop to it. The only stop really and truly is to bring around a change that Ontarians are asking for.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Change the team.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** And we all know what that change is: It's a change of team, absolutely.

But back to affordable housing: There are massive wait-lists, as I said, and there's nothing for these people except to wait and to get into some sort of housing.

In my riding, with the way this Liberal government is headed, affordable housing is going to be a huge issue. The government closed the Walkerton jail—hundreds of jobs lost. The government closed Bluewater Youth

Centre—over 200 jobs lost. E.D. Smith in Seaforth is relocating in June to the US—again, more jobs lost.

We have to take a look at Bill 14, make the amendments and make sure affordable housing is a reality for everyone.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I'll briefly join the debate, welcome guests here to the gallery and just tell you what's happening here. So there's a little bill—it's not a big bill; it's a small bill—that would help co-ops, a really important kind of affordable housing in Ontario, something we desperately need to invest in and build. So many people can't afford rent. We have a government that's done far too little to protect tenants, to build affordable housing, and we have an opposition party that's now stalling so we can't do anything else. I'm not going to stall anymore; I just wanted to get you up to speed. Welcome to the Legislature.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments. Which one? There are two people standing. The Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Thank you, and thank you to Harvey and his cohorts up there, who are being very patient waiting for us to finish the debate.

My constituents in Guelph support this bill. Let's stop the filibuster; let's get this bill passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to follow the address by my colleague from Huron-Bruce, Ms. Thompson—a wonderful address. I'm always interested in hearing about how the co-operatives work. And the goat-milking industry; that's quite interesting. I had a chance to join Lisa in her riding back before she was elected, and a very interesting day we had.

Anyway, my constituents talk to me about what's bothering them, too. And this bill is going to get through because we support this bill, but we also support the right of every member to speak to a bill, Speaker. That is part of the process here in this Legislature. But I'll tell you what my constituents are telling me—and a shout-out to Harvey Cooper and his folks; they are wonderful, dedicated, committed folks that keep coming here whenever this bill is debated.

**0930**

You know what my constituents were telling me when I was home on the weekend? "What is wrong with this government?" Scandal after scandal after scandal, and now we know, at a very minimum, I say to the Attorney General, \$585 million. That's not the top. We think it's going to go higher, but at a very minimum—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** She's talking about what her constituents are telling her. We're talking about—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Is the Attorney General done now?

*Interjection.*



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. You got that off your chest; I'm happy. There are a few ministers that are getting very lively.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, continue. You do have a way of bringing it out. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

Perhaps the Attorney General simply wants to stand in his place and rise and apologize for this scandal on behalf of his corrupt government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Kenora–Rainy River.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** You know what? It is time for us to move this bill on to committee. There are so many important things that we need to deal with in Ontario, and I believe that the Conservatives, on some level, know this, because they have officially run out of things to say. When they're talking about, "We need to build more affordable housing units," I think they might need a history lesson. Do they remember what they did when they were in government in the 1990s?

So you know what? You've run out of things to say. Let's move it on to committee. We'll make amendments. It's not perfect, but we can get there. So, please.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** And I thought it was going to be boring today.

The member from Huron–Bruce has two minutes.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'd like to extend my appreciation to the members from Davenport, Guelph, Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and Kenora–Rainy River. But with all due respect, especially around the whole essence of co-operativeness, I never run out of things to say, because as I said, my village exists because of co-operatives.

To the leadership of the housing federation of Canada: I sincerely thank you. It's a different mindset that embraces the whole concept of co-operativeness. This is where we, as a House, need to be open and willing to hear what people have to say.

Ladies and gentlemen, while we squander and see this government waste dollars down the drain over and over again, we can't lose sight of the fact that people across this province, in 95 out of 107 ridings, live in co-operative housing—95 ridings have this issue in their home. People are on a waiting list; over 140,000 people are waiting to get into affordable housing.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have to keep talking about this, because it's an absolute shame. With 600,000 people out of work, and more manufacturing jobs being lost every week, we are going to be in dire straits.

Scandal being the new norm in Ontario is not acceptable. The only way to change this is to change course with a new team.

Let us tell you this: The PC caucus feels Bill 14 is very, very important. We need some amendments; we need some tweaks; we need to get it into committee. But we need a chance to talk about this.

I'd like to use the last seconds of my time here today to revisit the fact that we need fairness and balance. Co-operatives across this province strive hard to serve their

members well. I would dare say this Ontario government could learn a thing or two about co-operatives and from co-operatives.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** It's my pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 14, the Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013. I'm sure the Attorney General is excited to hear the debate.

Anyway, housing co-operatives are an integral part of many communities across the province. As the member from Huron–Bruce has just stated, there are many different co-operatives that she has in her communities.

In this case, with non-profit housing—since not everyone can afford to buy a house or a condo—co-op housing can provide the affordable housing for people with moderate incomes, a valuable part of our communities, especially mine, that struggle for affordable housing. Since the floods have certainly hit parts of my riding, we're going to have an even greater need for affordable housing for those poor people who have been affected, both in the Minden Hills township and in Kawartha Lakes.

But it's the co-operative members themselves who make the big decisions about how the buildings will be maintained and how the business of the co-op will be managed. Because the members who live in housing co-operatives are the ones responsible for running it, they develop a pride of ownership and a sense of responsibility, and that's what we'd like to help build into people's lives—that sense of pride and ownership in where they live.

Housing co-ops come from all walks of life. The diverse backgrounds of the inhabitants often turn these residences into vibrant, thriving communities, as has been mentioned again by the member from Huron–Bruce this morning. There are around 550 non-profit housing co-ops in Ontario. These co-ops provide affordable housing for 44,000 households which represent about 125,000 Ontarians, including many of our citizens who, as I mentioned before, are least able to afford high-quality housing. So there certainly is a need.

Like all forms of housing, co-ops are not immune to the inevitable disputes that occasionally arise over rent arrears, late payments, wilful property damage and illegal activities—and those are just a few of the examples that exist out there. But the bulk of this bill aims to improve how those disputes are dealt with. So in making some important and overdue changes, I do agree, to the laws governing housing co-ops, this bill has been a long time coming. It's been clear for many years that much of what is proposed in Bill 14 has enjoyed the support of many members of the Legislature, from all parties, but I know my colleague the member from Leeds–Grenville is an expert on this issue. He's our critic for municipal affairs and housing. He said that these changes are mostly good public policy and that the people living in co-op housing have been asking for them for years.

It's clear that the current process for ending occupancy agreements in co-ops is time-consuming, expensive and

complicated for these non-profit housing providers and their members. The bill will amend the Residential Tenancies Act and the Co-operative Corporations Act to move most co-op tenure disputes from the courts to the Landlord and Tenant Board. This board was established under the Residential Tenancies Act to resolve rental housing disputes. So under the proposed legislation, co-ops would apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board to resolve tenure disputes when they are based on grounds currently provided for under the Residential Tenancies Act. Essentially, we would be moving co-op housing disputes into the forum where all other housing disputes are settled. As my colleagues have mentioned, the Co-operative Housing Federation has asked for this change to ensure that decisions related to evictions are fair to co-ops and their members.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It's an important change.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** It is an important change. Several of my colleagues have also mentioned that the Landlord and Tenant Board is not a perfect institution. However, it can fulfill its goal of providing timely access to specialized, expert and effective dispute resolution. It is clearly a better forum than the courts in which to resolve matters between co-op housing organizations and members.

Unfortunately, the government has decided to tinker with this version of the bill in a way that could well make timely, expert and effective dispute resolution less rather than more likely. The bill before us today is in every respect identical to its predecessor Bill 65, with one exception. We now find a section of the bill proposing to authorize the Landlord and Tenant Board to waive the \$45 filing fee for low-income tenants.

There are two potential problems with this. Firstly, we want to be sure that this change won't encourage disgruntled tenants to take every minor dispute to the Landlord and Tenant Board. If this were to happen, we could see even more congestion in a system that, by many accounts, already suffers from the large backlogs and delays. The second potential issue is that this fee collectively represents an important source of revenue from which the board can recover some of its costs. We worry that Ontario taxpayers will be on the hook to cover any revenue shortfalls that result from waiving this fee. As this legislation transfers disputes to the Landlord and Tenant Board, it seems likely that the board's operating costs will see a corresponding increase. So this amendment therefore has the potential to be self-defeating. What is the point of rerouting disputes from the court system if we are going to send them to a similarly backlogged board?

Fundamentally, we don't know the effects and unintended consequences of this new addition to an old bill. It's disappointing that the government has chosen to tamper with the widespread cooperation that we achieved over the bill in the last session by throwing in this amendment.

0940

Let me return to the important point that the PC caucus supported the bill's predecessor, Bill 65. When it was introduced in the last legislative session here in this

chamber, we debated its merits and eventually decided that it was a piece of legislation that largely made sense. Unfortunately, when the former Premier decided to prorogue the Legislature in order to give the Liberal Party time to reinvent itself, this bill, along with 100 other pieces of legislation, died on the order paper.

Going back even further, several members have mentioned the private member's Bill 198 brought forward by the member from Etobicoke Centre, which suffered the same fate as Bill 65 by dying on the order paper.

Those in the co-op industry must have an incredible amount of patience, and we're testing it. This Legislature has been talking about this change for half a decade. To me, that says it's about time, particularly when measures have enjoyed support from all three parties. We do want to debate this bill, for everyone to have an opportunity to debate it, but it strikes me as somewhat hypocritical that the Liberal government should stand up and sing the praises of the bill when they've repeatedly shown the people of Ontario that they care more about avoiding a contempt motion and picking a new leader than crafting sound public policy.

Our party indicated over a year ago that we were prepared to support the changes by this bill's predecessor. The important and consequential provisions in the bill, those that we on this side of the House support, should already be law and making life easier for housing co-operatives. However, the former Premier and his team had other priorities.

Returning to the aspects of this bill that caused all three parties to support its various incarnations over the years, our court system is busy enough without having to deal with disputes involving the residents of co-operative housing. Courts are simply not the appropriate place to be dealing with issues arising between co-ops and their members. The Landlord and Tenant Board, on the other hand, is set up to deal with just these sorts of issues. Perhaps sometimes stakeholders become frustrated with the board, but its design is a far better fit than the court system. Bill 198, Bill 65 and now Bill 14 were on the right track in seeking to shift disputes between co-ops and their members to the Landlord and Tenant Board. The numbers that I have seen suggested that court disputes cost co-ops about \$1 million a year.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Shameful.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** It is too much.

The ministry has estimated that the cost of resolving co-op disputes in the courts can range from \$3,000 to \$5,000 each, which is just too large for people. Of course dollar amounts don't consider the huge amounts of time, effort and voluminous paperwork that parties are required to invest in when they are involved in a dispute that is going through the court system. I hear that every day in the riding. That is money and effort that could be invested into our co-ops rather than wasted on resolving disputes.

It's important to ensure that co-op housing in this province can function as effectively as possible. The co-op model has great potential as a means of creating hous-



ing, and I think everybody in this House has talked about the need for affordable housing in their riding. In this debate, we've heard from members from across our province about examples of successful co-ops whose members have created an environment in which to live. However, we've also heard that an effective eviction dispute resolution process is simply not in place. It is therefore only logical to allow non-profit housing cooperatives to follow the same well-established process that exists for ordinary landlords and tenants.

Mr. Speaker, I see my allotted time is just about to run out. We look forward to further debate and to seeing this bill move toward committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for her comments. I would say, though, that it's a bit odd for us on this side of the House to listen to the Conservative members speak about a lack of investment in affordable housing. I suppose it's possible that some of the newer members may not be aware of the record of the Conservatives from 1995 to 2003. I would add to that as well the lack of investment that continues to flow from their federal cousins. This is obviously having a big impact.

This is a relatively small but significant reform to this piece of legislation. The co-op sector is here again representing their people in the Legislature. They're looking forward to seeing this move forward as quickly as possible, and we'd look for some co-operation from that side of the House to make that happen.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to comment on the address by my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. Clearly, she has spent a great deal of time looking at this issue and has understood the ramifications and the effect that this bill will have on the co-op housing industry, and she stated in a very passionate way that it's a change that is required and should be implemented as soon as possible.

The number that she cited as \$1 million being spent in the courts on disputes—sadly, that is money badly spent. These changes that we support in the legislation, in moving those disputes to the Landlord and Tenant Board, are supported by all parties.

I want to thank the member for her comments on the bill; also, for taking her right to speak to the bill seriously, as all members of our party have. Members of other parties have decided that they do not wish to speak to this legislation. Here in the PC Party, we've made it clear that we want to speak to bills, after having our rights as parliamentarians taken away from us back in October when former Premier McGuinty, without any warning, just like a tsunami, shut down this House, shut down the Legislature. We have made it clear that members take their rights seriously, and we were not pleased with the way the Liberal government, in order to hide from controversy and scandal, decided to shut down this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, we hope that they will take their responsibility seriously, look up at that wall and look up at that owl and govern themselves accordingly, and ensure that the rights of members of this Legislature are not trampled on in that fashion again.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I would just respond to my friend from the Progressive Conservative Party that two wrongs do not make a right. We didn't agree with prorogation either, but that doesn't mean that in this instance we're going to take that cost out on our co-op housing providers. Right now, we have an opportunity to get this dealt with at committee, and any concerns they have can be done there, so let's get on with it. Let's pass the bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Just for the record, I didn't agree with prorogation either, as is well reported in the Kingston Whig-Standard of those days.

I was elected in 1995, and two things happened. Number one, you cut the social service budgets for the people of Ontario by 22%, something that's totally unforgivable. The other thing you did—and some of the members who were elected at the same time know this quite well: There were all sorts of non-profit housing projects slated to be built, ready to go—some were already halfway on the ground—and you cancelled each and every project.

Finally, I was Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for four years. I do not recall one question being asked, during those four years, by the official opposition about social housing. You have absolutely no interest in it. Do not make the people of Ontario believe that all of a sudden you believe in social housing, because you don't.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Oh, come on. Go back. Ask Joyce Savoline.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Nepean-Carleton.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** —Nepean-Carleton is quite robust today. So we'll cut it back a little, won't we?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My Sens won last night.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** We will cut it back a little, won't we? Thank you.

The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock has two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Mr. Speaker, if I could just pick up a little bit on the comments by the Attorney General. How outrageous that he thinks that the PC Party and the members over here don't care about affordable housing. It's selective memory. You've actually gone through all the Hansards for the last years and have the nerve to tell us that we don't care about affordable social housing—is not accurate; I'm trying to pick the right legislative word. But for him—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thanks.

0950

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Back to the bill, after I've already commented on the Attorney General's misinformation and his remarks to us. Look, this bill is being debated—Bill 14. I think we're bringing some logical amendments that need to be brought forward. They were the government in power for over nine years that didn't deal with this. Now, of a sudden, they want to deal with it, even though they prorogued and didn't do—I think I've mentioned three forms of this bill that we have seen.

Maybe we should ask the government—if we can get it to committee and there are actually amendments made. Your track record of bringing bills back and actually completing bills to help the people of the province of Ontario is really not stellar.

I care about affordable housing for the people in my riding, even though the minister disagrees with that. I've mentioned some very vulnerable people who are in my riding, who are recovering from floods, who may not be able to go back to their houses—most of them probably won't.

We have some reservations about this bill. We are happy when it does go to committee, and we would be even more pleased if the government would listen to the amendments brought forward from the people of Ontario, not just us, and make appropriate changes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** A point of order from the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the comments being made by the Attorney General contravene standing order 23(h). He is making allegations against members of this House that are unfounded—figments of his own imagination. Unlike the gas plant scandals, which we have facts on, this man is now trying to—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** All right. Can I speak? Thank you. I think that's not a point of order, and you know that. Any differences that members have in the House, they can certainly discuss it, or if there's a problem, usually in question period you can ask for a late show. But I think you can deal with that other than in this place, so I think we'll continue on.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you for at least recognizing me, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Further debate?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Have we all figured this out now?

The member from Northumberland–Quinte West.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Welcome back.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be back here; thank you, Mr. Attorney General.

As I sit here this morning, listening to the bantering go back and forth between the government heckling the opposition who are actually trying to do their democratic

rights in representing our constituents, it's quite disturbing.

Obviously, co-operative housing is an important issue. We've made it very clear in the PC caucus that co-operative housing and this piece of legislation, Bill 14, does need to go forward. It's something that when we look at the bill itself, it is quite heavy. It addresses a good number of issues that do need to be addressed. It's actually, in comparison to the Liberal budget, only seven pages short of the budget bill, Bill 65, brought forward by the Minister of Finance. So it is going to do some good—Bill 14, that is.

Bill 65, the government's proposed budget, does more damage to actually hinder, I would say, low-income housing for individuals who are struggling to make ends meet. Here we have a government that is spending over \$10 billion annually on interest alone because of the debt that they've generated in this province. Imagine what \$10 billion could do for health care, education, infrastructure and low-income housing for those who need it the most—\$10 billion.

If there was a ministry just to handle interest that we're paying on our provincial debt, it would be the third-largest ministry the government would be handling, next to health care and education, respectively. So I do have some grave concerns with the Liberal government bantering the opposition about us not actually caring for low-income housing.

I have, in my riding of Northumberland–Quinte West, quite a few individuals who use co-operative housing, and others who are struggling to make ends meet who are in low-income housing. It's a great thing—the member from Huron–Bruce pointed out—coming from the smaller areas of my riding and the rural areas, the co-operatives are imperative to the functioning and day-to-day activities that transpire there.

The reason that this government has been forthcoming with this bill, because of the prorogation—and I want to make a strong point here and impress upon the viewers at home: Prorogation actually took away the rights of their elected officials to address major bills, like Bill 14, that are going to actually have an impact on the day-to-day proceedings and the duties of those individuals back home who are struggling, again.

To the point we have here, there are some great things in Bill 14, and I think that it's moving in the right direction. It will be interesting, when it does go to committee. We can actually sit down and make some amendments, because, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, no piece of legislation is perfect. So when it gets to committee, that's where we can actually get some more input from stakeholders and make the tweaks, the final tweaks, to make it work.

I think the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock brought in a very good point, and that is the point that this government is notorious for putting forward bills that are actually substantive and are going to actually have a positive impact on the lives of the people of Ontario, but never bring it forward once it gets to committee. They keep their bills in committee.



**Interjection:** They hide.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** They hide, and this is unacceptable. This isn't what the process is supposed to be.

So, Mr. Speaker, we do have some serious concerns with the way this government has brought forward the bill. For them to sit here and say that we, on this side, have no authority when it comes to speaking to co-operative housing—I have great concerns with that. What they're doing, by allowing us to continue this debate—they're not debating. They're not standing up and letting us exercise our democratic rights. I think that's quite important. I think this is a tradition, obviously, historically, about the parliamentary process.

It's well documented that this Liberal government, obviously, does not care about democracy and the parliamentary process and how that works here in the province of Ontario. We here in the PC caucus appreciate the history and the tradition that those who came before us fought and died for, and actually took the time to exercise those rights.

We're excited about getting Bill 14 to committee. But again, this scandal-plagued government needs to be held to account. The Liberal government has had the opportunity to really work on this bill, thanks to all their self-imposed delays. However, maybe they would have been too busy working on scandal cover-ups instead, because this is, again, a fairly weak bill.

I do first remember when this bill was previously introduced by the current Premier. I think that on all sides of the chamber here, we can agree—which we have—that this is something that needs to be addressed, and we can do a better job.

1000

But until we get our province in a situation—and I think our leader, Tim Hudak, said it best. It's one thing to have a social conscience and help others who are struggling. That's what we all are: We're in this together, collaboratively, collectively, co-operatively, as a whole. But when you're mortgaging the future lives of our young children—a newborn child this moment in the province of Ontario is already strapped with \$20,000 of debt thanks to this Liberal government. Think about that for a moment. "It's only \$20,000," some people might be saying, but that is a significant amount of money. That is money that we cannot afford to have. That's money, as I pointed out earlier when I stood, that could go directly into helping low-income families, providing a roof over their heads.

I've seen from an education standpoint how important having housing is for the development of young children. When children are in a home where they feel safe and secure, they actually do much better in school. So it is important for all of us, as concerned citizens of this province and this great nation, to ensure that Bill 14 gets to committee and we work on that.

But this Liberal government has shown contempt for the scandals that they've brought forward. They're hiding behind the gas plant scandals, the millions of dollars that they've wasted. It's quite disturbing.

I think what we need to do is that when we get this to committee, I'm going to greatly anticipate—I won't hold my breath, but I can't wait to see if this government actually brings Bill 14 to the forefront once it gets to committee and the debates have been handled there.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** I just want to respond to one of the things that the member from Northumberland—Quinte West said. When he was talking about us wanting to move this on to committee, he likens that to us being anti-democratic. I want to take a minute, as my colleague from Davenport does, and explain the process to the people at home. The first step is that we debate this piece of legislation in this House. Then it moves on to committee, where we're able to discuss it line by line, clause by clause. So this is by no means the end of the democratic process for this bill. No one is suggesting that we turf this bill out the window; we're just suggesting—it sounds like the Conservatives may be in support of this. I've heard other members of the House who are in support of it. So let's move it on so we can discuss it clause by clause, we can improve it and we can get results, which is something, let's face it, we really need to do in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I think I represent more co-ops than anyone else in Canada. I keep on hearing from the official opposition that they care about people who live in co-ops. There are folks who are down here—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I actually don't usually interrupt the person from Nepean—Carleton when she's speaking, so I'd like the same courtesy.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Did you want the floor or—because I can sit down.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, you can sit down for a second right now. We won't have any cross-dialogue, we won't be talking to the people in the gallery, and the member from Nepean—Carleton will allow the member to speak. Thank you.

*Continue.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is a very large issue for people. This is something that's in the middle of their lives. It's in their homes; it's in their co-ops; it's their ability to resolve conflicts. It's a critical piece of legislation that has—this is the third attempt, I think, to get it forward. It would be good if we could actually get this to committee and get it back.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Some of the members opposite right now who are heckling me are a little concerned. Their federal counterparts over the next five years will take 24,000 people who are low-income families living in co-ops, cut off their subsidies and geared-to-rent and put them out in the street. This will be one of the largest losses of affordable housing in the history of the province.

So if the official opposition, the Conservative Party, actually really cares about people in co-ops, those 24,000

people who their federal cousins are dumping in the street, maybe they could get some hearing from them. And they could at least have the decency to move this bill forward in a reasonable way. There has not been one new idea. We've heard the same statements repeated over and over again. If they have something new to say, either say it or allow it to go to committee.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Nepean—Carleton, point of order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Similar to the point of order raised earlier by my colleague from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke about the Attorney General making allegations, I think the people on this side of the House are a little tired of hearing from blowhards on the opposite side that we don't care about people. I think that's a bit unacceptable and I think it's beyond the pale of expectation in this chamber.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** As the member knows, she got her points in even though it's not a point of order. I can't distinguish whether the member is going by history or his own information; I can't distinguish that. That's not my position.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Oxford isn't talking when I'm talking, is he?

I don't call that a point of order. Continue.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill and we do support it as the PC Party of Ontario. We would like to see it progress quickly, and this is work that needs to be done. It provides for much-needed reform to the dispute resolution process, which would save great dollars for the co-ops, which they need, because there are far too scarce dollars. It might need a little bit of fine-tuning, but that can be done in committee; we know that. We need to address the concerns and rights of landlords—they have expressed some issues to us—but we can do that in committee. All the little details that aren't in the bill that satisfy all of us can be fixed, and we know that.

The real sad thing here is that it could have been done a long time ago. This is 2013. It could have been done in 2012. The reason it wasn't done in 2012 is because this government prorogued. They did not prorogue because they were interested in co-op housing in Ontario. They did not prorogue because they were interested in improving the legislation that would help the people who live in co-op housing in Ontario. Three times this has come up; three times it has not happened. This last time, with prorogation, they suspended government because they had one scandal too many. There was eHealth, there was Ornge, there was Presto, and now gas plant scandals, and their feet were just getting a little too close to the fire. The way to get out of that kitchen was to prorogue.

There was no concern given to the people in the co-op housing organization, the good people who are here to see this passed today. They've defiled this place, the Ontario Legislative Assembly, the seat of government for

the province of Ontario, which is based on a British cultural Christian heritage going back to the Magna Carta of 1215. All of that history, all of those hard-won battles for freedom and rights of people, which is property rights and people's rights, which are the same thing, were defiled.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** The previous member is correct: The Liberals have held this bill up for this many years, and it's unforgivable. But for the Conservatives to continue filibustering when this could have been done in April 2013 or possibly March 2013, and now we're in May 2013, is just as guilty. Two wrongs don't make a right. Let's get it done.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Northumberland—Quinte West has two minutes.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think the member from Carleton—Mississippi Mills said it quite eloquently in the fact that this is not just a bill that we're debating here. We're talking about the rights of Ontarians; we're talking about the rights of individuals who live in a free democracy. We're talking about the rights of the citizens here that this bill will actually affect.

The Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation pointed out that this is the third attempt at bringing forward this bill. We agree. But my challenge to this government—and you can mark my words, those individuals who came here today, out of their busy schedule, to listen to us further debate on this: Once this gets to committee, this government will not bring this bill forward in committee.

My friends, I'm sad to say this, but this is how this government operates. They invite you, it looks good, they get a photo op; they get to put out a press release—that thing is great. But the fact of the matter is the underlying messaging that they're going to do is not going to be effective. That's the Liberal government of the province of Ontario for you. It's sad.

But yes, when we get it to committee, we are going to do our very best to try to bring this forward and make amendments that are actually going to be substantive and actually have a positive impact on the individuals who this bill is designed to help. This government will not. Mark my words: It's going to happen.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1011 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Introduction of guests? The member from Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This, of course, is not an introduction of guests.



It's obviously an update for my favourite Montreal Canadiens fan, the Speaker.

Yesterday, my team, the Ottawa Senators, were down 2-0, until the third period, when we scored not one, but two goals to put it into overtime. I watched that overtime goal by Turris. Now the Ottawa Senators are leading their Stanley Cup playoff series 3-1, Speaker. I couldn't have done it without you, and they couldn't have done it without the great support of allowing us to have these updates.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. I thank the member for the update—maybe.

Introduction of guests.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Mr. Speaker, I could spend some time defending the Montreal Canadiens this morning, but we'll wait till Thursday night.

More importantly, I'd like to introduce two people from my riding of Peterborough today: Bob Campbell, president of the board of the Peterborough Community Counselling and Resource Centre, and Ms. Casey Ready, executive director of the Peterborough Community Counselling and Resource Centre. We welcome them to Queen's Park today.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I want to extend a special invitation and welcome to Bryce Davison, a grade 7 student at Light of Christ Catholic Elementary School in Aurora. He's joined by his grandfather His Worship Gary Davison, mayor of the township of South Frontenac.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The Minister of Children and Youth Services. Oh, sorry. The member from Newmarket—Aurora.

Let's keep these as quick as possible, please.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** While I'm standing, I want to congratulate my colleague from Nepean—Carleton on her thrill of having the Sens win a game—probably their last one in this series, Speaker.

We're all looking forward to the Toronto Maple Leafs tonight—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Okay. I think we've probably had the last of our updates. We have to keep going.

Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you, Speaker. Today is family service day here at Queen's Park, and I'd like to speak a little bit about family service day and make a couple of introductions.

I know that the staff who work at Family Service centres make an extremely important contribution to our families and our communities. Today I'd like to introduce to the House some people from Family Service Thames Valley and Family Services Windsor-Essex. Sandra Savage and Robert Young are from Thames Valley. As well, from Family Services Windsor-Essex, I would like to introduce Joyce Zuk. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I welcome everyone to the reception in room 228 after question period.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I rise today to welcome our page from Thornhill, Shruti Sandhu, and her family, who

are here with us for question period. They are Davinder Chawla, Devender Sandhu, Aditi Sandhu, Surinder Sandhu Kaur, Vivek Gupta, Rhea Gupta, Manish Agarwal, Dhanu Agarwal, Priya Rastogi, Neha Rastogi and Anu Agarwal. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** In the west gallery, I'd like to introduce Mr. Cesar Kowalski and Cindy Preer, good friends of mine from Stoney Creek, and accompanying them is my lovely wife, Carole.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Obviously, it's a special day here: family service Ontario day. I'm pleased to introduce a couple of people who are here from the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre: Nancy Chamberlain, executive director, and Danielle Peuramaki, who's a board member with the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre. Welcome. Everybody come to the lunch in rooms 228 and 230.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to recognize that it is Harry S. Truman's 129th birthday. Receiving celebration at that was Marcel Beaubien, who was the member from Lambton—Kent—Middlesex in 1995 and 1999. Welcome to the Ontario Parliament, Marcel. Thanks for coming.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I'd like to acknowledge Kitchener-Waterloo Counselling Services Inc. for all of their tremendously important work in our community and welcome their executive director, Leslie Josling, who is here to represent them today. Welcome to Queen's Park, Leslie.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to welcome two individuals visiting the House today. Their names are Sophia Karapita and Farina Ekra. They are from my ministry.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I would like to welcome, from the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing, Alan McQuarrie, Helen Antebi and Derek Thompson to the House.

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** In addition to Nancy Chamberlain and Danielle Peuramaki from the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre, we also have Rob Barrett, the executive director of the Catholic Family Development Centre from Thunder Bay, here as part of family service day in Ontario.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'd like all members in the House to recognize the York region board of family services that are also joining us today. Please help me welcome them here to Queen's Park.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I'd like to acknowledge Family and Children Services Niagara here today. Bonnie Filipchuk, service director, community and clinical services, Family Counselling Centre Niagara, is with us today.

**Mr. Rob E. Milligan:** It's my pleasure to introduce Patricia Hollingsworth to the chamber this morning. She is the executive director of the Northumberland Community Counselling Centre. Welcome.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to introduce the family of one of our hard-working pages, Victoria Farkas, from my riding of St. Paul's, and they are here in the gallery today to observe question period. They are Gabriella Evinich, Balazs Farkas and Abigail Farkas. In fact, it's Abigail's 11th birthday today. Please join me in welcoming them.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm delighted to introduce, from my riding of Guelph, Kate Power, who is the executive director of Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph Wellington. They provide a number of wonderful counselling services in our community.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It's my pleasure to introduce Mariana Benitez, Susan Warren and Elisha Laker of York Region family services. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further introductions?

There is a reason why I went over the clock in making sure that everyone had an opportunity to introduce their guests. I want to define this once more. I will have to be stricter, and I blame myself for that, and I apologize.

I would ask you to stand, introduce your guests and sit down. Please avoid the extra add-ons. That way, everyone gets a chance, within the five minutes allotted, to introduce their guests, because that's the purpose.

I'm going to ask, kindly, the member from Nepean-Carleton and the member from—should I say that, Newmarket-Aurora, even though you're defending me?—to give us updates at a later date, or somewhere else.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Whatever. So I would ask us to stay focused on introducing our guests here in the House. Thank you.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question to the Minister of Finance: Minister, at committee yesterday, we saw former Premier McGuinty display the same disrespect for taxpayers that we saw from Premier Wynne at committee the other day. It seems sad that the Liberals treat truth like an inconvenience, and accountability like a bother.

Given the serious nature of the matters, Minister, before the Ontario Legislature, don't you think it's time that we allow Ontarians to have their say? Do they believe that your move to spend their tax money to cancel gas plants—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Sorry for the interruption. I believe the member was finished, the leader was just finished—or not?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. No, no. And I'll stop the clock for that.

I'm going to ask people to come to order on this. The shout-outs are not necessary, and I'll start to name your riding quickly.

Leader.

1040

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Finance Minister, given the serious nature of the matters before the Legislature and commit-

tee surrounding the gas plant scandal, don't you think it's time that people had their say—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Question.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** —a vote in the Legislature. Does this cross the line into corruption, or is it simply the cost of doing business?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** So, Mr. Speaker, what I know is this: This side of the House has been asked to report to the committee. This side of the House has taken leadership by being more open and transparent and by initiating initiatives to disclose as much as possible. This side of the House has reported and delivered and appeared before this committee to disclose all that they know. Yet, Mr. Speaker, that side of the House doesn't show up. The Leader of the Opposition has been called and he hasn't appeared. For that matter, neither have any of the other candidates who fought and said that they too would not put the power plant in that spot—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The same goes for this side.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We all in this House agreed that the siting of those power plants was inappropriate. They all said they would cancel it and/or move it, as did we, and that's exactly what we've done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** It is disappointing to see the same smug disregard for taxpayers from the finance minister that we saw in evidence from Premier McGuinty and Premier Wynne; similarly, the same degree of evasiveness, to put it kindly.

Let me ask—and hopefully I'll get a more serious answer from the finance minister. So Colin Andersen appeared at the committee. He refuted the testimony of both Premiers Wynne and McGuinty, and he said that everybody knew the cost was more than \$40 million. Premier Wynne and Premier McGuinty said they were not aware of that.

So, Finance Minister, clearly somebody is not being honest with the people of Ontario, and it should be up to them to decide. So if Colin Andersen was not being honest with the people, shouldn't he be fired, or if Premier Wynne was not being honest, isn't it time for her to go?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The only one being smug is the Leader of the Opposition, who does not appear. We've asked for him to appear. We've said to him and to all others that we're willing to work together for the very purpose of getting to the truth and understanding what has taken place, understanding that they themselves also said that they would not build the power plant.

They themselves took the steps, by way of an election no less, to say that they would cancel it, and they appeared before the communities with a bus and did a press conference. They even had a pink elephant right on the site, saying, "Vote for me because I will be the one who will cancel the power plant." And he sent out robo-calls, and he was on the telephone and doing town halls, standing up for the fact that we should not put a power



plant in that place, and that's what we've done. We've delivered on the very promise that he said he would do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** You know, that's the kind of clownish answer from a finance minister that shows us why we have lost confidence in the ability of this government to get us out of the hole that we're in.

Let me ask you a question, Finance Minister, that you dodged the first time, and hopefully you'll be more honest and direct this time. We're tired of the Liberals blocking a confidence vote here in the Legislature. We're tired of the Liberals blocking the ability of members to stand up—or sit down—when it comes to deciding, does this gas plant scandal cross the line into corruption, or is any price worthy of being paid simply to save Liberal seats. Don't you think we owe it to Ontarians to actually stand in our place and say this was right or this was wrong? Don't we owe it to Ontarians to actually stand in our place and say this goes across the line, or is it simply the way this government is going to operate? Minister, will you call that confidence motion to the floor of the Legislature today?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please.

Finance minister?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, the only circus that has been happening here has been the actions of the opposition. We have taken the steps necessary. The Premier wrote to the AG in regard to Oakville. We all agreed that was a good thing. We immediately called the House back, and we struck some committees. We expanded the scope of the committees. We offered documents from across the government. The Premier appeared before the committee, and the committee, since February, has heard from over 26 witnesses.

Furthermore, we have listened to the local communities. We recognize that we need to take proper steps going forward so that this doesn't happen anywhere else ever again. We need to make sure that we have the proper setbacks and the proper siting.

Mr. Speaker, we will stay focused, and what we need to be focused on, when it comes to a confidence motion, is the budget. The budget is what matters to the people of Ontario. They're asking for us to continue moving forward, continue stimulating economic growth and continue to create jobs and the well-being of everyday people in their everyday lives.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, it's time your Liberal government stops evading accountability. The ultimate accountability measure is a confidence vote right here in the Legislative Assembly, right on the floor.

It seems to me, if I was the finance minister, the first meeting I would have called, had I been you, would be to

ask Colin Andersen of the Ontario Power Authority to give me a full costing of the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga plants. As the incoming finance minister, when did you ask for a briefing from Colin Andersen of the OPA to get a full cost on the cancellations of Oakville and Mississauga?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We immediately wrote to the Auditor General to examine the cost of the Oakville relocation. We immediately took the steps to identify all the costs that had taken place. The complexity and the changing of OPA estimates is understood now by all, so we have to make certain that we get it to the right numbers. I have taken the precautions necessary in putting something in our budget that accommodates the costs that we do know and, going forward, will ensure that the contingencies and so forth are taken into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition wants to continue to deliberate over an issue that we are already resolving. What the people of Ontario want to know is, what are you going to do to help their lot in life on their everyday issues? What are you going to do to support this budget that speaks to the needs of the people of Ontario right now? We need to continue to create jobs—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, come to order.

While we're at it—stop the clock—I've been hearing people use people's names again. This time, I will go to that individual if I continue to hear first names, second names, other than—you must address people by their riding or by their title. If it continues, I'll single that person out.

Start the clock.

Finish—10-second wrap-up.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I do appreciate the opportunity to reaffirm what's really important here, and that's to stimulate economic growth, ensure that we're creating the jobs necessary for the people of Ontario and move forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplement—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Back to the minister: Well, with all due respect, Ontarians want to know when you asked for a full briefing from Colin Andersen of the OPA in your capacity as finance minister on one of the biggest, most expensive scandals in the province's history.

Sir, you asked for the job, you campaigned for the job; Ontarians spent billions of dollars for you to keep your job. Sandra Pupatello turned down the job so you could get it. Now you need to do your job.

Will you tell us when you asked for a full briefing from Colin Andersen of the OPA? Why aren't you doing your job?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I believe that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Attorney General?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** I believe that Hazel McCallion, the much-revered mayor of Mississauga, had it spot-on when she came before the committee and she said, let the committee do its work. Get on to something else. Get on to the issues that the people of Ontario really and truly care about.

We have been as open and transparent as you possibly could be. The Premier appeared before the committee, which has never, to the best of my knowledge, happened before. The former Premier appeared before the committee. All of these people are trying to be open and transparent, to tell you exactly what they knew and when they knew it. Let the committee do its work; let the Auditor General do his work—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I can't believe what I just heard.

Back to the Minister of Finance: Minister, the hard-working people of Ontario want the accountability resorted to in this Legislature. Your Liberal government's unwillingness to call our want-of-confidence motion for debate shows the arrogance with which you have treated this entire scandal and your refusal to deal with the consequences.

1050

Today I tabled a motion that will be debated this week and will automatically cause a vote on the call to motion for the want of confidence. The NDP need to decide whether they're going to prop up this government, a government they continue to criticize. We look forward to them voting in favour of the want of confidence motion. We believe Ontarians deserve a vote in this Legislature to see if the Liberals have the confidence of the people. It is imperative that all members get that opportunity to vote on the want of confidence motion. Will you call that motion?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Stand up and do the right thing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You know we've talked about timing before. You have got to be better at it because when everything gets quiet, you are heard. Thank you.

Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** The Premier appeared before the committee, which is unprecedented in the history of this Legislature. The former Premier appeared. When is the Leader of the Opposition going to appear? When is he going to appear? When is he going to come up with his costing as to what it would take? The costing will be—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Actually, this is a comment to both sides: Someone is answering, let them answer. Someone is asking, let them ask. And the shouting back and forth will be stopped quite quickly.

Finish, please.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Very simply, when is the Leader of the Opposition going to appear in front of the committee and tell them what he would have paid to cancel those plants, because if he had formed government, heaven forbid—he didn't—he would have cancelled the plants as well.

Let the Auditor General continue with the work on the Mississauga plant—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** That's decent. Now you don't even want to listen to the answer.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Oxford, come to order. The member from Thornhill, come to order. The member from York, come to order. The member from Nepean–Carleton, come to order. Second time, the member from Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

I've got a system, and it will work.

Finish.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Speaker, it's very unfortunate that the members ask the question and they don't even want to listen to the answer. They want to shout down the government in giving them an answer to the question they've asked.

My question is, when is the Leader of the Opposition going to come up with his estimate of what it would cost to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Over the last few days, we have heard from thousands of Ontarians who say they want to see positive change in the budget but they also need to know that the government is going to be investing their money transparently and accountably. We think that's a concern that we should all take seriously in this House. Does the Minister of Finance agree?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Of course we agree. It's why we've put in our budget a number of accountability measures. On pages 217 to 220, we talk about a number of initiatives that we've put in place to support accountability; we also put it on pages 143 to 145.

More importantly, Mr. Speaker, it was this government that also introduced legislation around the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010, as well as the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act, 2004. We as a government took the steps necessary, because of what has happened in the past, to ensure that even pre-election reporting be reviewed by the Attorney General. We are always open to more transparency and fiscal oversight in the things that we do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.



**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, my initial thoughts are two words: gas plants. That's how well their accountability works.

People are being told that they have to make sacrifices in tough times, that there's not enough money to go around while we try to balance the books. They see hundreds of millions of dollars going to waste at Ornge, at eHealth and at the gas plants, while their government claims they have to make cuts at hospitals in order to invest in home care. Is the minister ready to admit this is a problem and take concrete steps to address it?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It's why we've taken a number of measures already. We're strengthening the post-secondary education accountability measures in our budget. We're taking steps to ensure even more accountability around home care and community care. We've taken steps around the child welfare initiatives in our budget. There's a whole slew of opportunities that we recognize are important to take better measures, including transfer payment accountability, tax report accountability and agency accountability—all issues that we recognize are important, that we know require greater oversight, and we will continue to work towards doing just that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Yesterday the Premier claimed she had "done everything in her power" to be accountable. With respect, I don't think that's a good enough answer. Ontarians are frustrated with the government's failure to be accountable, and families deserve to have a government that's accountable to them.

Today I put forward a simple idea: a financial accountability office modeled on Ottawa's parliamentary budget office. Is the government ready to start rebuilding trust with Ontarians?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, as mentioned, we've taken a number of initiatives, a number of steps to improve accountability. I believe that to be a very interesting idea. I do look forward to having this discussion and I look forward to having a very productive conversation around the issue.

I think what's necessary here, as well, is to get this budget passed because there are a number of things at stake, a number of things that the opposition members recognize all too well need to be addressed and need to be passed in order to proceed. I would like to cite those measures in the budget and recognize that what's important here is the well-being of the people of Ontario. I look forward to continuing to work with the opposition members to do just that.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Minister of Finance. Ontarians want to see real, positive change that improves their lives, but too often they've seen governments act in the interests of their own political party instead of the interests of the public. And instead

of giving people the facts, their government gives them empty spin and misleading information. A financial accountability office would take a small step to providing some real accountability. Does the minister agree that more accountability is needed here?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I responded to that. We have already cited the fact that we're taking a number of measures in our budget to address greater accountability. We've taken the steps necessary to improve what we need to do going forward. We recognize that the idea put forward is a good idea. It's interesting; it's something that we see has happened with the federal government.

What's at stake right now, though, Mr. Speaker, is increasing the Ontario child benefits. What's at stake is the Ontario Trillium Benefit that the member from Beaches—East York has been advocating for. What's at stake is auto insurance that the member from Brampton has also been advocating for. What's at stake is permanent gas tax funding for our municipalities. What's at stake is more roads and bridges funding for our rural communities. What's at stake is an infrastructure modernization plan that will continue to support the people of Ontario and greater competitiveness going forward.

Mr. Speaker, what's at stake is for us to ensure that we're on plan to reduce our deficit to zero, and we need to do that for the benefit of creating more jobs and helping people in their everyday lives.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** With all due respect, what's at stake is the trust of the people in their government. That's what's at stake.

Yesterday, the former Premier admitted that he didn't know and didn't much care what the cost would be of cancelling the private power deals in Mississauga and Oakville. And in her testimony, the current Premier made it clear that she didn't much care either. Ontarians deserve a lot better than that. That's why New Democrats put guarantees in our suggestions for the budget and it's why we clearly identified savings so that we could invest in prosperity that everyone can share in without making harmful cuts. And it's why we're calling for a financial accountability office that would let the public know how the government intends on spending their money. Surely the minister doesn't have a problem with accountability.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We're taking steps necessary to improve and enhance our accountability, so that's not the issue. The notion of being a caring and more compassionate party—we actually have a whole section in our budget around a fairer society. We know we need to support those most vulnerable so they get a better start and ability in life. The member opposite should be looking towards them and finding ways to support this budget on that score.

But as I said, it's an interesting idea. I welcome the opportunity to have that conversation. This is not about being partisan. This is about the people of Ontario. Let's look after them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I fear that what I heard is that the minister seems to think the status quo is good enough, but he seems to be the only one who thinks that, because people are telling me that they want to see a budget that is fair, transparent and accountable to them. That's not what they see right now.

Will the minister tell Ontarians whether the status quo is good enough or whether he agrees that Ontarians deserve something better?

1100

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We've consulted with over 600,000 people in the preparation of this budget. For the member now to suggest that we're going to consult after the budget has been prepared, after all the work that's been done, after the contributions and recommendations that have been made by all members of the House—we've taken those initiatives, we've taken those steps and we do agree: We want to be more accountable, we want to be more transparent and we want to take those measures. We're implementing those in this budget.

It's interesting that the member now is trying to somehow express that they're the ones bringing this idea forward. Fine; take credit all you want. What really matters is the people of Ontario. We will work for them. We'll work with you and we'll work with the official opposition to that end, because what we want is to stimulate economic growth. We have a very sensitive recovery, all the more reason that we need stability—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. Minister, we've always known that the Liberals will do and say anything to put their party's interests first. We saw more proof of that yesterday as the former Premier tried to explain away your gas plant scandal. First you needed the power, then you said you didn't need the power. The current Premier finally admitted it was a political decision, but the former Premier says he cancelled the gas plants for the kids—too bad no one over there cared about those kids a few years earlier; we could have saved at least \$585 million—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The members will come to order. Thank you.

Please carry on.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I'll ask the minister: Tell us how much money you've set aside in your budget for your seat-saver program.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I don't know where that member was five or six years ago. I know where I was, and I know what I was doing to support and protect communities. These power plants weren't even in my riding, but I was concerned about the well-being of the people of the communities that surround it.

That is why I sat on the Clarkson Airshed Advisory Committee. That's why I stood with 12 to 15 different

town halls to support the community. That is why I advocated to move those power plants from the very beginning. I stood by, and I asked for the support of the members opposite—I stood by the energy critic, no less. When he went to those communities, he said "No, it's a done deal"—only after I came forward and fought for it. As I sat in the rump, I sought people's support.

To the member opposite: We were there; I was there all along, fighting for the community and making certain that this sort of thing never happens again anywhere in the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** I never heard a budget figure, so—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** —it's obvious the minister has taken tap dancing lessons from the House leader.

There's more proof of how desperate your Liberals are to save their own hides and cling to power. They continue to ignore a centuries-old parliamentary tradition in bringing our non-confidence motion to the floor of this House. They continue to hope their orange life preservers to my left will sell themselves out and rescue them from the orange sea of scandal.

We tabled a motion today calling on this House to bring our original non-confidence motion to a vote. Minister, will you do the honourable thing, put democracy and the people ahead of the Liberal Party, and bring forward our non-confidence motion?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** To the Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** The member is a former mayor, and he knows very well that the real confidence motion and vote is on the budget. That's what we're talking about here. This is a fair budget that's being presented to the people of Ontario. That will be the confidence vote, and we'll see how you and the members of the NDP vote on it.

But in the meantime, I still come back to the point I made a little bit earlier. Why is the Leader of the Opposition not appearing before the committee with his numbers as to what it would cost to move those plants? We've got the Auditor General, who did a report on the Oakville plant situation. We've got him doing one now on the Mississauga plant situation. The Auditor General is highly regarded. Why don't we let him do his work and why don't we get on with the rest of the work for the people of Ontario?

#### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Minister, when the Premier was selected by the Liberal Party, she didn't even bother to ask the outgoing Premier how much it would cost to cancel the plants in Mississauga and Oakville in the scandal that eventually



cost the member for Ottawa South his Premiership. Being a leader means asking tough questions and it means giving tough answers, but neither the former Premier nor the current Premier did that.

Doesn't the Acting Premier think that showing real government accountability to the people means that the Premier should have at least asked her predecessor about the cost of the cancelling of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The Premier has gone well beyond. She has taken full responsibility and she wants to increase her accountability and transparency on this measure. That's why she sought support from the other members of the House to do a committee that would allow for all of this to come out even more quickly. She has asked the right questions. She has now written to the AG in terms of getting all the costs that were involved with Oakville, and they agreed; we anticipate them shortly. She has asked for an immediate call back to the House so that we can strike these committees.

We've expanded the scope of the committees. We've offered documents from across the government. The Premier has appeared before the committee; the past Premier has done the same. We've had our Ministers of Energy appearing before the committee. We have taken over 26 witnesses to this committee. We are doing our utmost to try to get to the issues and to resolve them, more importantly, so they never occur again in the future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Yesterday I asked the former Premier whether the current Premier ever asked how much the promise to cancel the Mississauga gas plant would cost when she was the campaign vice-chair on the very campaign that made that promise. He said no, she never asked. I asked, when the member for Don Valley West was a cabinet minister signing cabinet documents on Oakville, did she ask the Premier about costs then? He said no, she never asked.

Ignoring these problems doesn't make them go away and it doesn't show respect for the Ontarians who are paying the bills. Does the Acting Premier think that the way to show respect for families means denying the people real accountability for wasting their dollars?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Unlike the official Leader of the Opposition, the Premier did appear before the committee. The Premier did respond to these questions. We are doing what the committee wants us to do. More importantly, though, the members should be asking, what are we going to do going forward? What are we going to do now to ensure that these sorts of things never happen again?

What steps have we taken to do that? We're providing for siting restrictions. We're ensuring that community engagement is there. We want to make certain that greater accountability exists.

More importantly, in this budget we talk about some of these initiatives, and this is what the member opposite should be working towards: supporting this budget so that we can get on with the business of helping the people of Ontario.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I've got a question this morning for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The budget speaks to creating a prosperous and a fair Ontario. It's something I know everybody across this province wants to see. We've heard a lot about the government's plan to increase jobs, tackle gridlock, reduce the price of auto insurance and improve access to home care, but homelessness is still a problem that affects far too many people in Ontario and across Canada.

All members of this House know that when people are given the opportunity to live in safe and affordable housing, our communities thrive. People are healthier, mentally and physically, and their children do much better in school.

The question this morning to the minister is: Can you tell us what our government is doing to tackle the pressing issue of homelessness across communities in Ontario?

1110

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** I want to thank the member for the question. There's nothing more distressing to me or our government than the knowledge that, somewhere in Ontario, there's a child or a family or a senior wondering where they're going to sleep tonight.

That's why our government remains committed to a long-term affordable housing strategy, the first of its kind, actually, in Ontario. Our investment in affordable housing is a partnership with the federal government. It's a \$480-million investment to repair 7,000 affordable housing units in Ontario. The program allows service managers to increase flexibility to let them develop local solutions to reduce wait times in communities across the province for people who need affordable housing.

In the first year of the program, we helped 600 households which are no longer in need of a roof over their head. It is our government's goal to ensure that those who need assistance when they're at their most vulnerable get the help that they need.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's good to hear the government takes homelessness seriously, as we all know the impacts of not doing that would be damaging.

But this conversation is about investing in affordable housing; it's very similar to the debate we're having about transit in the GTHA. They both require infrastructure investments, they take a long time to construct, and they're very expensive to build. We know the politics of these types of investments aren't easy; otherwise, other governments of other stripes would have come up with a long-term affordable housing strategy long ago. At the end of the day, all levels of government have a stake in seeing a plan materialize.

In the minister's answer, Speaker, she spoke about our partnership with the federal government. What I want to know is, what is this government going to do to continue dealing with homelessness after the current \$480-million commitment from the federal government runs out?

**Hon. Linda Jeffrey:** Again, I thank the member for the question. We recognize the importance of affordable housing and continue to make this case to the federal government. While our government welcomes the federal commitment to affordable housing as they recently announced in their budget, the fact remains that the federal government is reducing its contribution to social housing over the next 20 years to zero. That's why, along with other provinces and territories, we are going to be meeting our federal counterparts this June. I hope that we can work together to encourage our federal counterparts to live up to their shared obligation, in fact, their moral imperative on affordable housing.

I want to urge every member in the House, in this chamber, to join with our government to get them back at the table because this need for social housing is not a municipal issue, and it's not a provincial issue; it's a societal issue.

### POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, I deeply regret that I must, once again, ask the same question of you that we've been asking in committee and in this chamber on behalf of the people of Ontario. Both your current and former Premier have stuck to their talking points about regretting the decision to cancel the Mississauga and Oakville power plants at the cost of at least \$585 million.

At the recent retirement of Ontario's Auditor General, Jim McCarter said that governments work best when they're watched. Minister, you're being watched. Please use the opportunity to explain to the Ontario taxpayers how it is that a decision that had such serious financial implications would not be fully costed out before any cabinet decision was made.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** You know, the opposition can't have it both ways, Speaker. They wanted the power plants cancelled. All of your candidates said that. Your own leader said that. The third party wanted to get the power plants cancelled. We did exactly what every party and everybody wanted done. The people of Oakville and the people of Mississauga did not want those plants there. It's as simple as that.

Why don't we just let the Auditor General do his work? He is an independent officer of this Legislature. He did a report on the Oakville situation, and he'll do a report on the Mississauga situation. People of Ontario will make up their own minds about that. That's what this is really all about. Let's leave it to the committee. Let's leave it to the Auditor General. Let's talk about the real issues that are facing the people of Ontario today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** You signed this contract. You ripped up this contract. You need to take responsibility for this mess. At what point in this embarrassing charade do you actually acknowledge your mistake and admit that you were wrong to cancel the gas plant before you knew

how much it was going to cost the people of Ontario? As the finance minister, surely you understand how that makes the Liberals look so willing to waste millions of dollars while other people pay.

You could turn the page on this mess right now; you could do the right thing today and allow this assembly to debate the member from Simcoe-Grey's non-confidence motion. Will you do it?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton, come to order.

Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Well, Speaker, you know what this is all about as far as the opposition is concerned. It's all about political posturing. That's all you're doing, is political posturing.

Let the Auditor General do his work with respect to Oakville. Let him do his work with respect to Mississauga. We have been as open and transparent as we possibly could be. The Premier has appeared before the committee. The former Premier has appeared before the committee. And no matter what's done, no matter what further we'll do in this regard, you will not be supportive. You know it. You wanted the plants cancelled. They were cancelled. It's better for the people of Mississauga, it's better for the people of Oakville, and it's better for the people of Ontario.

### CANCER TREATMENT

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** My question is to the Acting Premier. Today the CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital is raising concerns about the financial donations that were revealed in the newly released contract between Medbuy and Marchese for chemotherapy drugs. He asked some pretty straightforward questions. Why is a \$20,000 contribution part of the bidding process? Can the Acting Premier answer this question?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I can say this, Mr. Speaker: The issue of the chemo drug dilution, everything that has occurred, is distressing for all of us. We all have members of our family or friends who have been affected. This has been drastic.

We've taken immediate steps to try to bring resolution to it. We need to do what's best for the safety and the security of the very individuals and the patients who are affected. It affects all of us, and I have been greatly disturbed by what has taken place. But I can say that we've taken steps; we've taken action. We've posted new regulations with all the hospitals to ensure that purchased drugs are only from accredited and licensed suppliers.

Health Canada, of course, has a role here, a very big role, in terms of oversight and to post and to make amendments. The College of Pharmacists has posted their regulation and bylaw amendments. We're working with organizations who have a shared responsibility on



this issue. And more importantly, we've asked Jake Thiessen to take over—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** The first thing that comes to my mind is, what is the province's role? With the release of these documents, hospital CEOs and patients are left with difficult questions about the bidding process. To many, it looks like nothing but a kickback. Throughout this fiasco, we have seen a government that has checked out of their oversight role, and the consequences have been immense for the people in this province. Will the Acting Premier clarify the purpose of this contribution and whether what many see as a kickback has any place in the transparent procurement process?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, we're the government that took steps to try to support the industry. That's why we've been dealing with generic drugs, for example, finding ways to afford and provide better value for our taxpayers. But this is more important than that; this is more important. This is about the safety and security of our people, the patients who are affected, to ensure that this doesn't ever happen again. It is why we have appointed a third party reviewer, Dr. Jake Thiessen, to provide recommendations on how we can prevent this from ever happening again.

We've asked all Ontario hospitals to ensure the appropriate quality assurance measures are put in place. We'll follow up with those hospitals and with the industry. And we'll continue to work with the federal government to ensure that they take the actions necessary to stop this from happening. We believe what's necessary is to protect the people and the patients of Ontario.

1120

#### INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** Mr. Speaker, my question, though you, is to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Our government recently tabled a great 2013 budget. This budget is about creating jobs and helping people in their everyday lives. Our government has presented a strong plan to help people across this province: creating jobs, connecting communities and giving everyone a chance to succeed.

A question that I am asked constantly by constituents in my riding of Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie is, what is the government planning to do to improve and modernize our infrastructure? Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure: Can the minister please inform this House about the investments our government is proposing in the budget to help communities across Ontario address their vital infrastructure needs?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I want to thank the member from Niagara Falls for his question and for his advocacy on this issue.

The finance minister has built on what has been an unprecedented commitment to infrastructure in Ontario. In years past, typically we would spend \$3 billion or \$4 billion on infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, we spent about \$13 billion this past year and have committed to \$35 billion over the next three years. This is about a 400% increase after 40 years of neglect.

We're also continuing not just to fund infrastructure but to focus on rural and northern communities. Particularly, we fund the strategic asset management plans so every community in Ontario has a good sense of the condition of its infrastructure, can help set priorities and can help work with the government to fund not just projects, but coherent plans.

We have a strong focus in the north on highways, in rural communities on bridge—and smaller communities, Mr. Speaker.

I have a feeling the Minister of Rural Affairs may like to weigh in on this as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** My follow-up question is back to the minister. I'm glad to hear the Ontario 2013 budget includes a focus on investing in growing infrastructure needs across the province.

In order to keep our economy moving forward and on the right track, we need to ensure we make the right investments to build infrastructure today. This includes the rural and the northern communities.

Like my riding of Niagara Falls, and Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie, many communities across Ontario face unique challenges when it comes to infrastructure.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Could the minister please provide an update to the House and to the people of Ontario on what our budget is proposing, particularly for rural Ontario?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I'm proud to say that this budget delivers for rural Ontario. We know that our rural communities face unique challenges and have important infrastructure needs. That's why the Ontario 2013 budget proposes a new \$100-million infrastructure fund for 2013-14. This fund will help small rural and northern municipalities build roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you that in 1997-98, 43% of all the roads and bridges were downgraded in eastern Ontario. We're catching up on that inventory.

I have a great quote from Bill Vrebosch, the mayor of the municipality of East Ferris in the riding of Nipissing: "The \$100 million being dedicated to rural and northern is exactly what we've been looking for for years," in the province of Ontario.

#### POWER PLANTS

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** My question is for the Acting Premier.

Minister, you, the Premier and your cabinet colleagues have been governing this province with the help of

smoke and mirrors to try to deflect the truth and responsibility for the ongoing gas plant scandal. We have examined countless documents and heard hours of testimony that clearly demonstrate the web of denials and half-truths which have been spun by this government.

The total disregard for the taxpayers of Ontario and the continuing attempt to conceal the entire truth is a vivid reminder to all Ontarians that your government—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm a little concerned about the weaving in and out of very close to being unparliamentary language, and I'm going to warn the member not to go down that road. Thank you. Carry on.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Their actions are a reminder to all Ontarians that the Liberal government has lost the moral right to govern. So will the government do the honourable thing and allow the non-confidence motion tabled by the member from Simcoe–Grey to come to the floor for a vote?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** To the Attorney General.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Speaker, let me just say what the esteemed leader of the third party said about your non-confidence motion in a recent interview on Citytv. Andrea Horwath said, “I think it's more about grabbing headlines and getting attention than it is a serious motion. From my perspective, let's deal with the real issues.” And she is totally correct.

Let's see what the member from Timmins–James Bay, Mr. Bisson, said. He said, “Absolutely”—again about the Tory non-confidence motion—“not, because ... it's a game that they're playing. This is an attempt on the part of the Tories to do what they normally do, which is to find a weird way to try to get a headline that doesn't get you anything in the end.” And he is totally right too.

Let's talk about the real issues that face the people of Ontario, and let the Auditor General do—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Barrie will come to order.

*Supplementary?*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** This is a real issue. This is the biggest scandal in the province of Ontario, and the taxpayers want an answer. Almost \$1 billion of their money—you have lost the moral authority to govern, so I ask the Premier—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Minister, the Premier has repeatedly said that the budget will be the confidence motion. Since the NDP have demonstrated once again that their support is always for sale and that integrity is no longer a matter of principle, I ask again if the government will agree to a real vote of confidence and allow our non-confidence motion to come to the House for a vote today.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Order. Thank you.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** A great bit of acting there; I'll tell you that much.

Speaker, do you want to hear about a real scandal that happened just before the 1999 election? Do you want to hear about a real scandal? It's when your government at the time—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Will he tell us about the building scandal from the 1800s, Speaker?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member's timing is pretty good again, so I'm going to ask the member from Renfrew to come to order. That will be the last time I do it.

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** The people of Ontario are still suffering the results of the Harris years. Do you want to hear about a real scandal? It's when your government in 1999 sold the 407 for \$3 billion—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Attorney General?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Barrie, come to order. The Minister of Rural Affairs, come to order. The member from Simcoe–Grey will withdraw.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** And the member from Huron–Bruce: If it continues, you'll be warned.

Attorney General?

**Hon. John Gerretsen:** Let the Auditor General do his work—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. The member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex will go to his seat to withdraw.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** He's the new hotshot over there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of the Environment will come to order—last time.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** He's the old one.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Thornhill will come to order.

The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'll withdraw “cover-up,” Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have a tremendous number of armchair quarterbacks who seem to want to do this. Just let me know.

The member will withdraw, with no comment.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'll withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

1130

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** To the Acting Premier: On April 24, the Premier and the Ministers of the Environment, Natural Resources and Intergovernmental Affairs announced with much bravado that they had stepped



forward to allegedly save the renowned Experimental Lakes research station in northwestern Ontario. Why, two weeks later, are scientists still barred from accessing the research station, putting the survival of important environmental research projects at risk?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** As the member said, yes, we were very proud to have our Premier stand to acknowledge the importance of scientific research that takes place at the Experimental Lakes. Since that time, Ontario has been working collaboratively with the federal government, the province of Manitoba, the International Institute for Sustainable Development and other partners to keep the ELA operational in the 2013 year and to ensure sustained longer-term operations.

I can tell you that the federal government currently controls the site and access to it. Ontario is working to provide operating support. We're working towards an agreement with the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and we want to assure all members of this House, all researchers and others across Ontario that we understand the urgency of this, and this is a very active and ongoing file.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Sarah Campbell:** The government website still claims that the Ontario government will "keep the Experimental Lakes Area operational in 2013," and that it will ensure "important science conducted in the ELA can continue," but today we read in the *Globe and Mail* that nothing has been solved. Scientists are being prevented from accessing the research station. Long-standing projects are being jeopardized. Instead of holding premature press conferences, when will this government actually do something to ensure that the Experimental Lakes research area remains open?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I can tell the member that what the Premier said was to indicate that Ontario is prepared to step up to ensure that the Experimental Lakes continue. As I said in the previous answer, and I suspect that if she reads the transcripts she will see that, we are working with the federal government, who control access to the site at this point in time. We're working with the province of Manitoba and we are working with IISD to ensure both a short-term and a long-term plan for the Experimental Lakes.

We understand fully—and we have been working to ensure that all parties, including the federal government, understand—the scientists' concerns and our government's desire for the research to continue as planned, this year and into the future. We're actively engaged on this file, and I think all Ontarians should be proud of the fact that our government has stepped up to protect the Experimental Lakes.

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Mike Colle:** To the Minister of Labour, through you, Mr. Speaker: On a too-frequent basis, I've got workers coming up to me in my riding of Eglinton—Lawrence.

These are people that make \$10 or \$11 an hour. They work as cleaners; they work at night. They love being here in Canada, they love the job, but they constantly complain about being pushed too hard by their employers. They always get intimidated, threatened with losing their job if they don't work hard, and they're asking me, "What can you do as the MPP? Can you ask our Ministry of Labour if they could do more to stop this very silent war that goes on in some parts of Ontario and Toronto where?"—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Join a union. All they've got to do is join a union. I'll give you a phone number.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins—James Bay, come to order.

**Mr. Mike Colle:**—and here's the member of the NDP not allowing me to ask a question about these workers. These workers are union workers; some are non-union workers. These workers are saying the government should be doing more. I'm asking the minister—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to assure the member from Eglinton—Lawrence that his constituents can rest assured that the Ministry of Labour is out there in workplaces across the province ensuring that workers know their rights and that employers are living up to their responsibilities. In fact, we have modernized our system to conduct more proactive work to better serve those that need our help.

In the 2013 budget, if that is passed, starting in 2013-14, the government will invest an additional \$3 million per year to hire more officers to provide proactive inspections at workplaces. This will bring the government's total investment to \$7.5 million since 2009 in proactive employment inspections. Our proposed funding will increase enforcement which in turn will help to ensure workers in all sectors are protected and treated fairly in all workplaces.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** You know, I told your staff just the other day, Minister, that I've got these night caretakers and cleaners; they work downtown in all the high-rise towers where all these guys and some women are making big bucks. Yet the cleaners, they're getting pushed around, asked to clean 40 washrooms in a couple of hours and then the manager comes along—and this is a union shop—and says, "Oh, well you're not cleaning fast enough. If you don't clean fast enough you're gone," and the poor guy is only making \$10.25 an hour to start.

Will these officers we're employing go into the downtown high-rise towers and talk to some of these people who own these buildings and these fancy companies and say, "You've got to treat your workers fairly. You just can't make money. Treat your workers fairly."

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** A very important question. The Ministry of Labour is committed to increasing compliance with the Employment Standards Act through education, outreach and proactive inspections.

The ministry now has a total of 30 officers, an increase of 50% from the previous year. If the budget is

passed, we will add 20 more officers to a dedicated enforcement team. These officers will conduct an additional 1,400 proactive inspections each year across the province; this is more than three times the number of inspections conducted annually since 2010. Proactive inspections help educate and encourage compliance so that workers in all sectors are protected and treated fairly in workplaces. This is a powerful and often-called-for change to how we will work with businesses, especially small businesses, and their workers. I hope all members will support the budget to make it happen.

### POWER PLANTS

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My question is for the Minister of Finance this morning, which only seems fair given we now know that the price to keep him in that seat is \$300 million. It's fair that he would stand up and answer some questions here today.

This government, Minister, is plagued by negligence in a way that is simply unacceptable. According to the OPA, everybody over there around the cabinet table knew that it was going to cost more to cancel those power plants than what the government originally said.

A week after the current Premier's shameful display of selective memory in front of the justice committee, yesterday the former Premier went before the justice committee and again embarrassed that office that he sat in for nine years.

The people of Ontario and this House have no confidence in this Premier, the old one, or this current cabinet or this current government. Why won't you call our confidence motion for debate? Put an end to this scam that's perpetrating hundreds of millions of dollars against the taxpayers of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I guess the rebut is this, Mr. Speaker: Why won't your leader appear before the committee? Why won't you appear before them and answer questions as well?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** We paid \$300 million for that seat. I can tell you right now, we overpaid for that seat. The people of Ontario paid \$300 million for you to stand there like a fool and not answer questions, and kick the question—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Which one, sir? I'll withdraw, I'll withdraw.

It's sickening for the people of Ontario to watch you laugh off \$600 million. You're laughing off \$600 million wasted. You don't have the confidence of this House. You don't have the confidence of Ontarians. We have absolutely no confidence in you to do that job, especially at the price that we paid for it. Call the want of confidence vote motion to the floor—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. *Interjections.*

1140

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Minister.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, we have a very serious matter before us indeed, and that's this budget. This is the confidence motion that the people of Ontario are expecting us to talk about. Deal with that.

### TORONTO WATERFRONT

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. According to Waterfront Toronto, the province's half-billion-dollar investment in the waterfront has paid off. Since 2001, Waterfront Toronto has generated \$240 million in revenue for the province and attracted development projects worth \$2.6 billion. This success is threatened by plans to expand Billy Bishop Airport to allow jet planes, which Waterfront Toronto's CEO warned could bring traffic congestion, noise, impacts to public space and disruption to boating and maritime activity. Why is the minister shrugging off airport expansion as a federal matter rather than defending the province's interests along Toronto's waterfront?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** We're not shrugging anything off. I think, on a number of issues, those of us on this side of the House may differ with the members opposite. We actually respect the Constitution of Canada. Airports are not regulated by the province of Ontario or any provincial government.

The zoning matters relating to the airport and the permissions and agreements are signed between the city of Toronto, the port authority, the airport and the federal government. We are the only government that isn't a signatory to it, nor do we have a say in it.

The party opposite often raises issues about when governments interfere in other jurisdictions. They and their cousins, where they're in government, are very defensive about protecting that.

As there are many members of his party on the Toronto city council, I have a lot of confidence in my city councillors to manage this issue well and to respect the jurisdictional authority of the federal government in this matter, who do regulate this and who are responsible for it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** The public wants a sustainable and vibrant waterfront, and the public has been clear that this does not include mega malls and Ferris wheels and mega casinos, and it does not include a mega airport either. I recognize that there are many who enjoy the convenience of a small-scale airline, but opening up the airport to jets and long-haul flights threatens the livability and vibrancy of Toronto's waterfront. Each time the waterfront has been threatened, the public has stood up to defend the public interest.

Will the minister stand with the public and defend the public's interest on the waterfront?



**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I will meet with Waterfront Toronto; I do on a regular basis. I will review the matters and recommendations of Waterfront Toronto. I also listen to my constituents who live in the downtown area, being the member for that area.

We understand the role of the federal government and the city of Toronto. Right now, the city council is actually considering this file. Maybe the member opposite does not have confidence in the city council of Toronto. We work very well with them and we have respect for them. I have confidence in Councillor Wong-Tam and Councillor McConnell—who's a member of this party—who are managing this issue well. Not one city councillor has called me and said, "Would the provincial government weigh in?"—not a single request, and I meet with my city councillors on a regular basis.

Given that his party is the official opposition, maybe they will have better success with this issue than they had with the environmental lakes when we did have to step in when the federal—

**Mr. Rob Leone:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order from the member from Cambridge.

**Mr. Rob Leone:** During questioning by our member from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes-Brock, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities suggested that she should ask a nursing question because she's a nurse. I hope he would apologize for that comment, because nurses can hold this government—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Let me rule on this one. That's not a point of order. Any member has an opportunity to correct their own record, as I have asked before—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Even while I'm in the middle of a sentence, the member continues.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I think the member ought to get his hearing checked, because I said no such thing.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Sit down. That's not a point of order.

There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1145 to 1500.*

#### WEARING OF BOW TIE STICKERS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I suspect I have a point of order from the Minister of Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I have a very important point of order this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear bow tie stickers this afternoon, in honour of the late Bruce Crozier, who was a friend to all when he served so elegantly and distinguishedly in this Ontario Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Rural Affairs is seeking unanimous consent, and I'm looking to make sure that everyone has access to the bow ties. Do we agree? Agreed. Thank you.

It is now time for introduction of guests. The Minister of Children and Youth Services.

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you, Speaker. I'd like to thank my colleagues for the unanimous consent to allow us to wear these stickers. As we can see, we have quite an esteemed number of guests up here, and I recognize you may introduce them, but if I may as well, I'd like to welcome a number of people who are here for the tribute for our friend Bruce Crozier.

We have Joan Crozier. We have David and Jolean Crozier. We have Ben, Cowan and Cate Crozier. If they stand up, they have little bow ties on. I think they look just adorable. Look at that. There's Nancy Crozier, and Emma and Adam Stoyles.

Of course, we have our former members Dwight Duncan and Mike Brown up there, as well, and I'm sure—sorry—you will introduce them as well.

I just turned around and I saw Dave Gene and Jamie Rilett, who aren't on my list, but I do see them up there.

Welcome, everyone.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Speaker, I'd like—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Not a report.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Well, Speaker, you're a Habs fan. I'm really sorry about those reports.

I just wanted to reintroduce somebody I ran into on the street yesterday. He's not wearing his bright yellow, banana-coloured hoodie that he was wearing last night, but it's nice to see Dwight Duncan nonetheless.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** This is going to be stepping on my toes again, because I normally introduce those former members as well.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** You go ahead—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I absolutely will—without the shot at the Habs.

Further introductions? Last call for introductions.

As is the custom of this particular Speaker and Speakers before me, I would like to introduce, in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Dwight Duncan from Windsor-Walkerville, 36th sitting; Windsor-St. Clair, 37th and 38th sittings; and Windsor-Tecumseh, from the 39th sitting. Thank you for joining us.

And of course—kindred spirits, for sure—Mr. Mike Brown from Algoma-Manitoulin, from the 34th to the 39th, and Speaker of the House.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Didn't Mr. Duncan serve in the 40th too?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Speaker stands corrected: and the 40th. From the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

Final call for introductions?

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I understand that although we've had a good introduction of the list up there, we forgot Deb Roberts and Paul Yeung, who are also here today for the tribute, so we want to welcome them.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I stand today to bring a very important matter before the House, and that is the World Trade Organization's appeal of a ruling that Ontario's feed-in tariff program is illegal. Speaker, this ruling was upheld.

Since the Green Energy Act was introduced and hastily implemented in 2009, the FIT program has done nothing but send electricity rates through the roof. It created a frenzy of wind turbines being built in communities that are not willing hosts, and it has taken away all powers from municipalities. Unacceptable.

What is it going to take for this Liberal government to admit to their mistakes, to admit that the FIT program is a failed program, to admit that they rushed into the green energy scheme too fast and too hard?

Since the decision from the WTO is now final, Canada, and subsequently Ontario, could have to pay damages to the affected parties. What we don't know yet, and what I ask the Minister of Energy, is how much more will Ontario taxpayers have to pay for yet another energy debacle? I can tell you that Ontario taxpayers are tired of paying for one mistake after another on this energy file. Between the cancelled gas plants, unwanted industrial wind turbines and an illegal FIT program, Ontarians have had enough.

I am proud that Tim Hudak and our PC Party have committed to doing the right thing, cancelling the FIT program, which we were against from the start. We have to make Ontario a stronger place to attract jobs and grow the economy.

### LOCAL ECONOMY

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** This past week, I had the distinct pleasure of leading a Jane's Walk in my riding of Kitchener–Waterloo in honour of Jane Jacobs, a ground-breaking advocate and progressive planner who said, "In order to find out what works for cities, you've got to get out and walk."

The focus of my event was the local food economy, which provided an opportunity to acknowledge some of our local sustainability leaders:

Little City Farm, an urban homestead that sets a positive example for sustainability;

Smart Growth Waterloo, who have emerged as a result of the local OMB decision. They have brought together ideas from environmental and community groups to speak in one voice about the future of Waterloo region;

The Bailey-Dick family, who raise urban chickens and work to educate people on the benefits of doing so; and finally

Seven Shores Urban Market and Café. Their contribution to the health of the Waterloo region starts with their commitment to sourcing local food and supporting local farmers. They pay their staff a living wage, and they purchase all of their products, whether local or international, on a fair trade basis. Seven Shores is committed to the protection of local employment and farmland, stimulating the local economy and building towards an overall improvement of quality of life in Waterloo region.

All of these amazing leaders are making a difference in our region, building a strong community and a thriving local economy, and I would like to congratulate them on their successful ventures and thank them for their invaluable contributions.

### FAMILY SERVICES

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I rise today to mark the fifth annual family service day here at Queen's Park. This is an opportunity for members of the Legislature to thank and show appreciation to all of the caring and committed persons in our ridings who work tirelessly each and every day helping others. For decades, family service agencies have helped thousands of Ontarians who face stressful and difficult situations.

Every day in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge River, I hear of the good work being done to improve the lives of people of all ages, from youth services to seniors' programs. For example, the Chinese Family Services of Ontario serves many of my constituents. This community organization offers linguistically and culturally sensitive services to enhance and enrich the quality of life of many newcomers living in Scarborough–Rouge River.

Our government shares a commitment with groups like this to provide services in the community for all kinds of people facing emotional, psychological and social problems.

Last year, over half a million Ontarians were served by community mental health and addiction programs. In this government's budget, we've committed to expanding funding for our comprehensive mental health and addiction strategy to \$93 million annually. This is an investment that is extremely valuable to ensure the well-being of many Ontarians. We will continue to work with dedicated people in our communities to care for others.

I'd like to once again thank our family services agencies for being there when our people need them. Thank you.

1510

### BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC ANNIVERSARY

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** On May 5, I joined with Samia's Royal Canadian Naval Association to commemorate the



70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, the longest battle in Canadian military history. Stretching for close to six years, members of the Royal Canadian Navy fought to keep open a critical supply line for Britain, defending merchant vessels from the onslaught of enemy submarines and aircraft.

Between 1939 and 1945, the Royal Canadian Navy in Halifax protected the critical raw materials, munitions and manpower supply line that fed the British and Allied war effort. Facing both the constant threat of attack from the sea and air, and the treacherous waters of the frigid north Atlantic, more than 25,000 merchant vessels crossed the Atlantic with the protection of the Royal Canadian Navy warships and minesweepers.

Numbering only six warships at the outset of the war, by Victory in Europe Day, Canada could boast of the third-largest navy in the world, with 270 ocean warships and 95,000 personnel, including 6,000 members of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service, otherwise known as the Wrens.

For its part, the Royal Canadian Navy lost 2,000 sailors in combat, 14 warships to U-boat attacks and another eight ships due to collisions and other accidents. However, this indomitable force could account for the sinking of 31 enemy submarines in defence of the main supply route for Europe.

The victory in the Battle of the Atlantic is a triumphant moment in the Royal Canadian Navy's history, and I am proud to stand with my colleagues and honour them here today.

#### DRIVER LICENCES

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I've been getting a number of calls from constituents genuinely confused as to this new code W on Ontario driver's licences that prohibits commercial drivers from crossing into the United States. While the American government has a rule that doesn't allow particular people to drive commercial vehicles in the event they have certain medical conditions, this is not the case in Ontario. However, since September 2003, this agreement has placed inactive W codes on internal records of commercial drivers who have one of four medical conditions restricted in the US. Ontario commercial drivers with any of these conditions, or drivers who have not filed a cyclical medical report, are prohibited from operating a commercial vehicle in the US.

The problem is that 47,000 people have been notified by the MTO that effective this month—with very little notice—they will be unable to cross into the US. It's coming as a huge surprise. It's leaving drivers at risk of losing their jobs. Their jobs are at stake. The only way they can combat this classification is to pay 120 bucks for a medical exam, if they can get an appointment. If the MTO has been working on this initiative since 2003, couldn't they have given more notice?

Can the government explain why they're using outdated data to restrict Ontario drivers? I've had complaints from Mr. Klimek in my office that he hasn't driven for

nine years, yet he got a notice to actually go and update his medical. So clearly the government needs to do something about this, or we're going to have a lot of Ontarians out of work.

#### CORRIERE CANADESE

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I was saddened to learn, just a few days ago, that *Corriere Canadese*, the Italian-language daily newspaper, suspended publications after almost 59 years—a great loss for the Italian-Canadian community, who will miss the insightful perspective of the *Corriere's* newsroom on current events.

The publication was founded by Dan Iannuzzi on June 2, 1954. The date carries significance because on June 2, Italians celebrate the country's long road to democracy and its establishment as a republic.

*Corriere Canadese* was Toronto's oldest newspaper after the *Toronto Star*. The paper gained popularity within the community through the 1950s and the 1960s, when as many as 60,000 Italian immigrants a year flowed to Canada in search of a better future for themselves and their families.

Still relevant today, *Corriere* continued to connect Italian Canadians with news of interest to the community here in Canada and information on the major events from Italy. "Fiercely Canadian and Proudly Italian" was the headline printed on the front page of each edition of the *Corriere*, and so many people recognize themselves in that motto.

I want to take a moment to thank all the journalists who throughout six decades have served the community with the utmost professionalism and dedication, with the hope the management will be able to solve the present financial difficulties, avoiding a definitive closure. I also hope this is not a farewell—an addio, as we would say in Italian—but just an *arrivederci* to future editions.

#### GRAEME MURRAY

**Mr. Norm Miller:** At a time when the NHL playoffs are in full swing and hockey rivalries are even making their way into the Legislature, I rise in this House today to recognize a world-class hockey player from my riding. I would like to congratulate Graeme Murray on scoring the gold-medal-winning goal for Team Canada at the recent world sledge hockey championships, which were held in Goyang, South Korea.

Graeme hails from Gravenhurst, in the beautiful riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, and has been a staple of the Team Canada blue line for over a decade. He made his debut at the Salt Lake City Paralympic Games back in 2002, when he was just 15 years old.

Known throughout his career as a tough defender, Graeme's offensive talents were on display in the recent gold medal game. His blast from the point early in the second period held up as the lone marker in what proved to be a hard-fought win over the United States.

I was proud to see Team Canada take home the gold, and I would like to wish Graeme the best of luck as he

prepares for the 2014 Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia. Congratulations to Graeme and the entire Canadian sledge hockey team on your gold-medal performance.

### OUT OF THE DARKNESS WALK

**Mr. Bill Mauro:** This Sunday past, at 6 o'clock Sunday evening at Confederation College in Thunder Bay, I had occasion to attend the third annual Out of the Darkness memorial walk. I want to stand today and just thank, congratulate and recognize the strength of the organizing committee, but especially one lady in particular, Margaret Hajdinjak.

Margaret began this walk some years ago; as I said, this was the third annual, but Margaret lost her son to suicide six or seven years ago and began this particular walk three years ago. This was the third annual. I want to recognize her for her incredible strength, courage and conviction in bringing this forward.

I don't know, and I don't know many people who are able to understand, what it is that's happening to our young people. All we know is that the rates of suicide are just so out of control that it has so many people scrambling for answers. What I do know is that Margaret, the organizing committee and everybody who is supporting her in her walk are truly engaged in something that we all know will be impactful in the lives of many people.

As I said there Sunday evening, the world is becoming a better place. We saw for the first time where a pro athlete, a member of one of the four major team sports, came out as a gay man playing in the NBA, Jason Collins.

There are many reasons for suicide; we don't know what they all are. But the world is becoming a better place, thanks to the efforts of people like Margaret and her organizing committee. They are impacting the lives of people. I want to just thank her for her strength, her conviction and her courage.

### AMATEUR BASEBALL

**Mrs. Jane McKenna:** The Major League Baseball season has been going steady for the past few weeks, but it's not the only game in town. In fact, for communities across Ontario, local and regional baseball can be just as top-of-mind.

Since 1919, the homegrown Intercounty Baseball League has won a reputation as one of Ontario's best amateur leagues and remains the province's premier senior baseball league. Many outstanding former pros play in the league, along with some of the best graduating juniors from across Ontario.

The league's teams can be found in communities from Ottawa to London. It's the London Majors, in fact, that the Burlington Bandits will be taking on in their home opener at 2 p.m. this Saturday at Nelson Arena. Known as the Twins in their first two years of IBL play before being bought and renamed by owner Scott Robinson during the recent off-season, the Bandits opened their season against the Guelph Royals this past weekend.

I'd invite everyone to visit Burlington this summer, take in a game and support the Bandits, as well as their season partner, the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton, who will be at every home game conducting 50/50 draws, giveaways and other contests. See you in the bleachers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements—especially the last one, since Brantford has won five championships in a row, but I won't say anything.

### BRUCE CROZIER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the government House leader.

**Hon. John Milloy:** Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to have tributes to our former colleague Mr. Bruce Crozier, who was an MPP here from 1993 to 2011, with a representative from each party speaking for up to five minutes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to give tribute to Mr. Bruce Crozier. Agreed? Agreed.

I recognize the member from Wellington-Halton Hills.

1520

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

He was, said his family, "a real gentleman; a true friend." What a beautiful and eloquent way to remind us of the remarkable life of service of the member for Essex, Bruce Crozier, who departed this place and then, so shortly and sadly thereafter, departed this world.

It's a real honour for me to speak in tribute to Bruce with his family here because I considered him a friend across the aisle, as we all did. On behalf of the entire Ontario PC caucus, I extend our condolences to Joan and the rest of the Crozier family.

Bruce was one of the best-liked members and one of the most effective ones during his long tenure, speaking on behalf of and representing the people of Essex county for some 18 years, an amazing record of service, far longer than the average tenure of MPPs these days.

As he once said, he was a constituency person first and foremost, which meant he instinctively and consciously put his constituents first. It meant he put his constituents ahead of his own personal ambition. It meant that, yes, he was partisan, he was loyal to his party, but he spoke up for his people. It meant that no one else wrote his script, and it meant that he didn't waste a lot of time chasing the Queen's Park press gallery after question period. He was a workhorse, not a show horse. He was the kind of member that this place relies upon and could not function without.

Bruce's life was one of service. Active for years in Kin Canada, he rose to become the national director. He was involved in many other community organizations at home in Leamington, too many to list here. He served on council and as mayor.

Professionally, he had a distinguished private sector career as an accountant and as an insurance broker. He



worked for years for Bennie Lumber and Building Materials and later for the H.J. Heinz Company, before joining us here in a by-election in December 1993.

When he arrived here, serving in opposition to the NDP government of the day, he soon was on his feet, not with an over-the-top partisan rant, for that wasn't Bruce Crozier, but instead his own thoughtful observations based on his life and his professional experience and what he was hearing in his riding. It was an auspicious start. For as long as his name was on the ballot in Essex South, and later, Essex, the other parties, including our own, didn't have a chance. Even when his party was dragging him down, as it did occasionally, he still had strong pluralities, underlining the respect that people had for him in his home community, the people who knew him best.

Before long he was a critic of several important ministries and he introduced a number of important private member's bills. I remember one in particular, which was an amendment to the Safe Streets Act. His bill sought to allow our volunteer firefighters to have occasional fundraising tolls on the main streets of our small towns. I voted for his bill at second reading and it ended up as a tie vote, which meant that the Acting Speaker had to vote as well, as tradition dictates, voting in favour of the bill to allow further discussion. It passed second reading. For those who say that one vote doesn't matter, it was one of those days when every single vote did indeed count.

Later on he had success again with a private member's bill that meant so much to him, and he talked about it in his farewell speech two years ago this very month: the Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Awareness Month Act. Because of the respect and trust we all had in Bruce, we allowed that bill to receive unanimous consent to be called for third reading and passed into law, forgoing the normal procedure. I know that he was very proud of this accomplishment, and rightly so. His bill will raise awareness and save lives, helping families forevermore.

In 2003, when the Liberals formed the government, Bruce was nominated, and then, by the passage of a motion of this House, he was reappointed Deputy Speaker. And then he had to go back to school, attending what I would call "the university of the chair." There, tutored by our patient and knowledgeable Clerk and table staff, he became an expert on parliamentary procedure and tradition, which he came to love and cherish, as we all do. Over time, he became the longest-serving Deputy Speaker in the history of the Ontario Legislature, outlasting three Speakers, and in this capacity he was known for his sense of fairness, his sense of humour, and his integrity.

He had a deal with Bert Johnson, who was another of our favourite members, who was also a presiding officer at the time. Bruce would do Bert's duty when Bert went on his annual fishing trip. In return, Bert would cover for Bruce during the week of the Indianapolis 500, which I think was not permitted to start until Bruce arrived in Indianapolis for this annual auto racing ritual. Indeed, the weekly morning meeting of the presiding officers and table staff could not begin until Bruce informed us of the

details of the previous weekend's NASCAR or IndyCar road race. He had a passion for auto racing like nobody I've ever met.

Then the subject at those presiding officers' meetings would turn to Emma, his granddaughter, and we'd hear the latest Emma story, every one of them beautiful.

Bruce enjoyed being a member here, loved making a difference and carried his responsibilities very well, but he missed his family terribly when the House was in session. He once told me how he hated "that apartment" when he was down here alone.

Conversely, you could see the joy in his eyes when he'd tell you that he was busy because Joanie was in town—Joanie, his bride of almost 50 years, the love of his life. We all know how much he adored you, Joan, and your family, and he was looking forward so much to spending his retirement years with you. But we never know—none of us ever know—other than the fact that God has a plan for all of us, and we are granted comfort in His love if we seek it.

Our Clerk, Debbie Deller, told me that when Bruce was first elected way back in 1993, he asked her to bring him into our legislative chamber here when the place was quiet and nobody else was around, just so he could, as he said, "soak up the privilege of what it is to serve here." At the end of his time, he asked her to do the same thing, so that he could spend a few quiet moments alone reflecting on all that he'd worked so hard to achieve for his constituents, for the people of Ontario, and what a privilege it was to serve here.

I'll always remember Bruce either sitting over there, the best-dressed man in the House, often wearing Prime Minister Mike Pearson's bow tie, I understand, or sitting down there in the Speaker's chair looking at his beautiful pocket watch and declaring it "6 of the clock," adjourning the House—even if his pocket watch was off by half an hour or even more—or standing down there, when I spoke to him for the very last time, wishing him well in retirement and promising to keep in touch.

A real gentleman, a true friend, and we can add to that an outstanding member who we'll always miss.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further comments?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour to stand here today on behalf of our party and our leader to pay tribute to my predecessor, the former MPP for Essex, the late Bruce Crozier, who served as MPP for the riding of Essex South—which was later renamed Essex—from 1993 to 2011. That's 18 years of dedicated service to our region and our province. So it would come as no surprise to the members of this House that Bruce was a political powerhouse. Mr. Speaker, I would challenge you to check his stats. He won by wide margins in each and every election.

You simply can't achieve that level of electoral success without doing the right things and having the right stuff, and Bruce had it, beginning with assembling a committed and hard-working team of constituency and legislative assistants. I want to acknowledge them today.

They are Carrie, Patty, Dan, Tracy, Darcy, Danielle, Robyn, Jamie, Paul, Susan, Kevin and Kandice. It sounds like your typical Essex county family, because indeed they were a family. There wasn't really that much turnover over the 18 years that Bruce served, and I want to thank them sincerely on behalf of our team and our party for the work that they did on behalf of Bruce.

Bruce was known as the consummate gentleman, and of course he was easily recognizable by his bow tie. He was kind-hearted and empathetic, but we know that nice guys only get so far. Bruce was most importantly effective. He delivered results for Essex county, most notably as the champion of our primary agriculture producers. He was a passionate ambassador for our region's farmers and agricultural industry. Whether promoting our region's amazing wine growing or working with our greenhouse and horticultural industry to expand and define itself as our nation's premier region for sustainable food production, Bruce's voice was heard loud and clear.

I know he was also instrumental in filling the gap for our grain and oilseeds and beef and pork producers in initiating the provincial business risk management program for those industries, an important program that ensures that our region's farmers can leverage the risks of their operations knowing that the government is there and will be there to support them in difficult times.

Bruce was recently recognized posthumously for his contribution to agriculture by his induction into the Essex County Agricultural Hall of Fame, and that is certainly a fitting tribute to his work.

1530

Bruce also recognized the vital need for good infrastructure to allow our region's agriculture and manufacturing industries' products to reach their markets. He was the lead advocate for expanding the Highway 3 corridor from Oldcastle to Highway 77 from two lanes to four lanes. As a testament to his work, that stretch of highway is now and will be forever aptly known as Bruce Crozier's Way.

And Bruce had a way about him, a way that he spoke to people, a way that he addressed their concerns and a way that, as an aspiring politician, I personally admired. I never got to tell him this, but I studied his performance during the 2007 election. He was remarkable—of course, seasoned, but impressive nonetheless.

As any good politician should, I learned a few things from him. I learned that people can pick up on insincerity quickly when you're in the public eye, so it's better to be forthright and steadfast than to try to wiggle out of a tough question. I also learned that our region, Essex county, as geographically large as it is, is actually a small place—we're all in the same phone book—and that county class transcends party politics.

As an example of the quality and caliber of Bruce's character, I can tell you that it was no more evident than when he paid a personal visit to my mentor and Bruce's predecessor, former MPP for Essex Pat Hayes, in December of 2010. Pat was in ill health and passed in

May of 2011, but Pat and his family told me how much that meant to him, that Bruce took the time to pay Pat a visit in his home to talk. That's class. What I would not give to have those two in a room together right now.

It's that wonderful personality, dedication to his community and resolve to represent our region that endeared him to so many for so long. But I know Bruce's proudest achievements are not his political endeavours but the strength and love of his family. His marriage to his wife, Joan, whom he referred to as his bride during their entire 49 years of marriage, was his crowning achievement. As many of us in political life know, the stresses and demands of this job are immense. A partner who is there for you through thick and thin is a gift to be cherished. I know he felt that way.

His son, David, and daughter, Nancy, and grandchildren Ben, Cowan, Cate, Emma and Adam are the legacy that Bruce surely was most proud of—a family that embodies the sincerity and love that Bruce felt for our region every day.

I want to thank Bruce's family for sharing him with us for so long. The sacrifices that you made as a family in order for Bruce to serve his constituents for so long are ones that only the members of this House and their families understand.

It is with great gratitude that I say thank you. Our province is indeed a better place for having had Bruce Crozier as our voice. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Teresa Piruzza:** Thank you, Speaker. Again, I'd like to welcome the family and friends of Bruce Crozier to the Legislature today as we all pay tribute to our friend and colleague Bruce Crozier. I'd like to thank my colleagues across the way, from Wellington—Halton Hills and Essex, for your words as well today.

Please know that everyone in the Liberal caucus has only the fondest memories of Bruce. Everyone that I talk to here, I'm sure everyone could give five to 10 minutes of their memories of Bruce. Please know that as well.

I, of course, did not have the opportunity to work with Bruce here, but being from Windsor, everyone in Windsor-Essex knew Bruce and what he was doing. He certainly was a very vivid part of our community and our region.

When I hear the name Bruce Crozier, many things come to mind: his love for his family; his love for the riding of Essex; his dedication to the people of Essex county. Among all the descriptors and words used to describe Bruce, one always stands out: genuine. With Bruce, what you saw was what you got. If he agreed with you, he was your greatest ally. If he disagreed with you, well, he'd let you know, as I'm sure members of both sides of this House who did work with him can attest to. I know everyone who knew him has their stories. Bruce was a true friend. Whether you were a family member or a constituent, you always knew that Bruce would be on your side, helping you, cheering you on and providing you with sound advice.



Speaker, I had the opportunity, back in 2011, to attend the renaming of that stretch of Highway 3 that is now known as Bruce Crozier's Way, a reminder of the special way that Bruce Crozier conducted himself as a member, as a citizen of Windsor-Essex, as a father and as a grandfather—truly, a testament to his dedication to the residents of Essex, a testament to his years of advocacy for the widening and extension of that highway for the safety of its residents. Every time I drive by that sign, I get a smile on my face because I remember Bruce, his easy smile, his dedication, and yes, even his bow tie.

As an MPP, Bruce worked tirelessly for the riding of Essex. Around the caucus table and in this chamber, you saw and heard Bruce proudly inform the people of Ontario of the needs and joys of Essex county.

Bruce's public life, as we know, dates back to 1985 as a councillor in Leamington, then mayor, then his election to provincial politics in 1993. His service and his commitment over that number of years are to be admired.

Today, we remember those contributions, remember that gentleman from Essex, our friend the late Bruce Crozier.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their very—

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Scotch for everybody, Mr. Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You guys have a way of stepping on all my lines.

I thank all members for their very kind and heartfelt comments to the family, and about Bruce.

If you'll indulge me—a personal observation. The last time I saw Bruce was days before the tragic event. He looked me in the eye and said, "Men should never be afraid to say 'I love you,'" and he said to me, "I love you," and I had the opportunity to say, "I love you, too."

I thank the family for the wonderful gift of Bruce Crozier. I wear this watch in honour of him, and I will never take it off.

The comments will be copied from Hansard, and we'll have a DVD sent to the family.

We thank you for the gift. Thank you.

As my wife says, gather yourself up.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### FIGHTING HUNGER WITH LOCAL FOOD ACT, 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 VISANT À COMBATTRE LA FAIM À L'AIDE D'ALIMENTS LOCAUX

Mr. Bailey moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 68, An Act to amend the Taxation Act, 2007 to provide for a tax credit to farmers for donating to Ontario food banks certain agricultural products that they have produced / Projet de loi 68, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les impôts pour prévoir un crédit d'impôt pour les

agriculteurs qui font don de certains produits agricoles qu'ils ont produits à des banques alimentaires de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**1540**

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Mr. Speaker, over 400,000 Ontarians have been forced to turn to food banks every month in 2012—an all-time high. This is a 10% increase since the 2008 recession.

Over 25 million pounds of fresh food is disposed of or plowed back into farmers' fields in Ontario each year due to cosmetic reasons, and today farmers cannot afford the cost incurred to deliver that unsold produce to local food banks.

The Fighting Hunger with Local Food Act amends the Taxation Act, 2007, to provide a non-refundable tax credit to eligible Ontario farmers who donate food to Ontario food banks—certain agricultural products that they have produced. The tax credit is 25% of the wholesale value of the donated agricultural products. Unused tax credits may be carried forward and deducted in the following five years. If the tax credit is claimed for a year, no charitable donation may be claimed in respect of that donated agricultural product.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SÉCURITÉ CIVILE

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Community and Social Services and Corrections.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Merci, monsieur le Président. I'm pleased to stand in the House to mark Emergency Preparedness Week in the province of Ontario.

Ontario has faced a number of emergencies in the past: ice storms, floods, industrial accidents and forest fires. No doubt we will face these and other emergencies in the future. The impact of emergencies can be significant and far-reaching. Superstorm Sandy was a recent reminder of the devastation that natural hazards can unleash on the whole region and its people. This is why it is vital that we all take action to be prepared.

Emergency Preparedness Week reminds us of the importance of being prepared and the value of each household having an emergency plan and an emergency survival kit. This year, Ontario is marking Emergency Preparedness Week by highlighting the importance of seniors being prepared for emergencies. While everyone in Ontario is encouraged to take action to prepare themselves and their families, seniors can be especially vulnerable during an emergency.

Les situations d'urgence passées ont démontré que les personnes âgées arrivaient très bien à s'entraider et à participer aux efforts communautaires d'intervention et de rétablissement après une catastrophe. Leur coopération à la sécurité civile est très importante.

Emergency Management Ontario, in collaboration with the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, has developed a new emergency preparedness guide for seniors. This guide shows how easy it is to be prepared for different emergencies, and outlines the circumstances and needs that seniors should consider when they plan for emergencies.

The first step for each of us is having an emergency plan that contains key information, such as where you would go in an evacuation and who you would contact if you needed help. It should also include your important medical information, the name and contact information of your doctor, and others who would assist you in an emergency.

The next step is building an emergency survival kit. This kit should contain non-perishable food, water and other provisions, such as a flashlight and batteries, to last three days. It should also have supplies tailored to the unique needs of each person, such as extra medication, medical equipment, or food and water for your pet.

It is only fitting that I mention the importance of remembering our pets when planning for emergencies, as this week is also Be Kind to Animals Week.

Finally, everyone should have other items such as clothes, blankets and personal items ready in case you have to evacuate your home.

Par ailleurs, la population de l'Ontario doit demeurer informée; c'est-à-dire qu'elle doit se tenir au courant des dangers locaux et de la façon de s'y préparer. Tout le monde peut s'abonner aux avis d'urgence de l'Ontario pour obtenir des renseignements importants sur les dangers qui menacent sa région.

By encouraging and helping more Ontario seniors to be prepared, we aim to help increase their safety and resilience in the face of disaster, and free up first responders to take care of those who are hit hardest by an emergency.

Personal preparedness contributes to building stronger communities. As the people of Ontario become better prepared, our towns and cities become more resilient and better able to deal with emergency situations.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage seniors in Ontario and their families to visit [Ontario.ca/beprepared](http://Ontario.ca/beprepared). Indeed, I encourage everyone to visit [Ontario.ca/beprepared](http://Ontario.ca/beprepared). There they will find resources to help them to become prepared and information on how to subscribe for emergency alerts.

Monsieur le Président, je prie instamment tous les députés de faire le nécessaire pour se préparer aux situations d'urgence. Je les encourage aussi à participer aux activités de la Semaine de la sécurité civile organisées dans leur collectivité et de transmettre les informations à leurs électeurs, en particulier les aînés, pour les inciter à préparer leur propre plan d'urgence et trousse de survie.

Your support will help build safer communities for all Ontarians.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize to the minister for incorrectly identifying her ministry. I said "community services," not "community safety." I apologize.

It's time for responses.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to respond on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus for the 18th annual Emergency Preparedness Week.

I agree with the statement by the minister. We're supportive of continuing to have an Emergency Preparedness Week, because it speaks to a very important issue, and that is to remind people that, should an emergency occur, there is a certain amount of responsibility on our part, as the government, and public agencies, but one of the most important things is for people to bear in mind that if this should happen to them, there is a plan that they should have in place themselves as well.

This year, the focus is on seniors. We have to be reminded, Mr. Speaker, that aged seniors could be much more vulnerable should an emergency beset them, either by weather or accident or whatever. So we also remind the families of seniors, if your mother or father or relative is not living in the same dwelling as you, to be prepared, should there be an emergency, to offer assistance to those seniors in your family as well.

My wife insists, during the winter months, that I have in my van all kinds of emergency supplies. I have a pair of snow pants; I have a pair of insulated boots; I have mitts; I have a toque; I have an air pump; I have flares. If she had her way, she would probably have more stuff in there. I said, "I've never broken down." She said, "Well, if you do, you'll be glad you have that stuff." So I thank my wife for continuing—though I've taken it out now, because I need the room. But during the winter months, I always keep that stuff in the van, and also a set of booster cables. I carry those all the time, and it's not only for my own use, but if I come across somebody that could use some help, that averts problems for someone else as well.

1550

The most significant emergency that I recall was the ice storm of 1998. That was not just an emergency, but a disaster, and that took place not everywhere across the country. Down in this part of Ontario, it was nonexistent, but as you moved to eastern Ontario and then into Quebec, there was a huge, massive—probably the greatest single disaster in Canadian history in terms of money that had to be spent to bring things back up to standards after the disaster.

A lot of people were caught off guard. When I was a kid, and certainly before my time, it was common in rural Ontario to have the power go out for significant periods of time. As time went on and our system became stronger and better, it was more and more rare that you would actually lose power, but in rural Ontario it was quite common. People were prepared all the time for a power outage, because they knew that they would happen on a regular basis. We don't expect them too often anymore, but we should always be prepared for those emergencies.



The minister was in my riding earlier this year, in townships in my riding. Brudenell, Lyndoch, the township of South Algonquin, the town of Huntsville, Bancroft, Minden Hills, Kawartha Lakes—they all declared emergencies this year because of flooding within their regions. It's an opportunity to remind every one of us again that we need to have those 72 hours of provisions of everything we need, whether it's medicines, medical supplies, food, water—all of the kinds of things that will allow us to survive for that period of time. If there's no intervention, if there are no first responders that can get there because they're dealing with a massive problem on a bigger scale, we have to be able to ensure that we can take care of ourselves for that period of time.

So we in the PC caucus applaud and support the establishment of Emergency Preparedness Week and the continuance of marking it on our calendars as a very, very clear annual checkup: "Okay, what do we have in the house? Are we prepared should an emergency take place? Are we ready? Are we in a position to survive clearly and comfortably for that 72-hour period?"

If it's beyond that, obviously, then it is something that is beyond an emergency, it's a disaster, but 72 hours I think is the right number. We should all do whatever we can to ensure that whatever emergency might beset us, we are able to survive for those 72 hours. I congratulate the minister for, again, announcing Emergency Preparedness Week, and we continue to support it on the PC side.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I, too, on behalf of the Ontario New Democratic Party and our leader, Andrea Horwath, want to commend the minister and her initiatives through the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, who indeed are informing, in a broad sense, Ontarians about this week.

It's similar to the week in which we all check our smoke detectors; it should be an annual reminder, as the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke just stated. It certainly should be something that we all take stock of: What would we have in case of a catastrophic emergency? It's not something that people think about every day. It's almost not something that people think about at all throughout the year nor, really, can you blame them. We don't go about expecting natural disasters to happen each and every day. But as we try to adapt to the changing nature of climate and the effects of climate change, we know that, more often than not, these emergent situations come through acts of nature, whether they be floods, tornadoes, slides or anything associated with climate change.

That's why, obviously, it's so important for us to have a plan and for us to coordinate that plan with various levels of government and various first responders: to ensure that, in conjunction with our first responders and emergency responders, we are acting proactively to make sure that our communities are safe.

It's also important to ensure that they have the right resources. We in this chamber are identifying what those resources are and actually acting upon them, whether

they be upgraded search-and-rescue tools for our first responders to be able to do those jobs, or, in fact, communication tools.

I think the most effective method of addressing any type of critical situation is to get the word out: "Here's where to go, here's what to do, and here's how you can remain safe." Obviously, in this day and age, we have various ways of connecting with our communities, and I applaud, certainly, the government's initiative on expanding that scope of information.

I also think that focusing on the most vulnerable population that we have, when it would come to a scenario where an emergency happened—our seniors, who indeed would be at a tremendous disadvantage if they had to rely solely on themselves to escape an emergency situation.

We need to make sure that the proper tools are available. We need to make sure that the proper plan is available, and that community assets are deployed to respond to those people and identify who those people are and how we can ensure their safety, and I think that this week allows us the opportunity to do that. It allows us the opportunity to thank our first responders for keeping our safety in mind, first and foremost. They put themselves out there. We call them the "front line," and that's a term that's typically used in a military context, because they're the ones who are first to see action. They're the ones we send into battle. They're the ones we rely on if these scenarios, unfortunately, come to play. They're the ones that we need to make sure have the resources, and we certainly can identify where those resources can be applied.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I commend the minister. I hope she knows she has my full support—and our party, in any way that we can facilitate getting the word out, ensuring that Ontarians know that there are plans available.

As the minister mentioned, I encourage folks to visit the [Ontario.ca/beprepared](http://Ontario.ca/beprepared) website. I'm certain there's a whole host of information that's available there for individuals and community partners to get the word out and for us to all remain safe and sound in this wonderful province of Ontario.

Merci, madame la Ministre, pour votre intervention aujourd'hui et pour toute l'information et l'éducation que vous donnez aux Ontariens.

## PETITIONS

### WATER QUALITY

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a distinct pleasure today to participate here at Queen's Park.

This petition is from my riding of Durham, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario regulation 319/08, public health inspectors are required to undertake risk assessments of small drinking water systems;

"Whereas many of these small drinking water systems are located in homes operating bed and breakfasts in rural Ontario;

"Whereas private homes that are the sites of bed and breakfasts already have potable drinking water used by the homeowners and their families every day;

"Whereas many of these bed and breakfasts have established the quality of their drinking water through years of regular testing;

"Whereas these home-based businesses are facing high costs to comply with the new requirements of regulation 319/08;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Health amend Ontario regulation 319/08 to give the testing track record of a small drinking water system greater weight in the risk assessment process. Furthermore we, the undersigned, ask that bed and breakfasts operated within a private home with a drinking water supply meeting all the requirements of a private home not be subject to regulation 319/08. Furthermore we ask the minister to work with the bed and breakfast industry to find simplified, safe solutions for smaller operations (three or four guests)."

I'm pleased to sign it and support it and present it to Megan, one of the pages.

#### PROROGATION

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** This petition contains over 100 signatures in support of my private member's bill that was passed after second reading: Bill 24, the Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, to ensure that prorogation is debated and supported by the majority of MPPs.

1600

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas MPPs are elected to represent their constituents in the Ontario Legislature;

"Whereas prorogation has an important role in Westminster parliamentary systems democracies that should not be abused by the government of the day;

"Whereas the use of prorogation to avoid accountability in sitting Legislatures has become a worrying trend;

"Whereas Ontarians deserve to know when their representatives will be back at Queen's Park when the Legislature is prorogued;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should take action to ensure that the Premier cannot prorogue without first seeking a resolution from the Legislative Assembly."

I will affix my signature and hand it over to page Kelly.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** "Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas agencies that support individuals with a developmental disability and their families have for ... years (beginning in 2010) faced a decline in provincial funding for programs that support people with disabilities like cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism; and

"Whereas this level of provincial funding is far less than the rate of inflation and operational costs, and does not account for providing services to a growing and aging number of individuals with complex needs with a developmental service agencies are being forced into deficit; and

"Whereas today over 30% of developmental service agencies are in deficit; and

"Whereas lowered provincial funding has resulted in agencies forced to cut programs and services that enable people with a developmental disability to participate in their community and enjoy the best quality of life possible; and

"Whereas in some cases client services once focused on community inclusion and quality of life for individuals have been reduced to a 'custodial' care arrangement; and

"Whereas lower provincial funding means a poorer quality of life for people with a developmental disability and their families and increasingly difficult working conditions for the direct care staff who support them; and

"Whereas there are thousands of people waiting for residential care and day program supports province-wide;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) To eliminate the deficits of developmental service agencies and provide adequate new funding to restore services and programs that have been cut;

"(2) To protect existing services and supports by providing an overall increase in funding for agencies that is at least equal to inflationary costs that include among other operational costs, utilities, food and compensation increases to ensure staff retention;

"(3) To fund pay equity obligations for a predominantly female workforce."

I agree with this petition and will give it to Brendan.

#### EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas servers and bartenders in Ontario earn \$8.90 an hour, far less than the minimum wage; and

"Whereas tips are given to servers and bartenders for good service and to supplement the lower wages they receive; and

"Whereas Ontario law allows for owners and managers to pocket a portion of servers' and bartenders' earned tips or total sales; and

"Whereas thousands of servers across the province have asked for this practice to stop;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:



"Support the swift passage of Bill 49, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act with respect to tips and other gratuities and thereby end the practice of 'tip-outs' to management and owners."

I am in agreement, sign my signature, and send it with page Megan.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberal government has announced that the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. will end its Hiawatha racetrack slots operations in Sarnia on March 31, 2013, even though the current agreement does not expire until 2018; and

"Whereas the end of this program will cost the city of Sarnia 140 jobs immediately and \$1.5 million a year in gaming revenues, not to mention potentially 60,000 jobs across the province if the program is scrapped entirely; and

"Whereas there has been absolutely no consultation with the community, employees, or owner/operator of the local facility; and

"Whereas the" McGuinty-Wynne "government continues to put more and more Ontarians out of work due to its ill-conceived, ad hoc decisions, including, in Sarnia, the loss of 80 jobs at the ... jail, 100 jobs at Lambton generating station, and numerous others due to high energy costs on businesses;

"We, the undersigned, call upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to demand that the McGuinty government stop risking thousands of jobs in Ontario and \$1.5 billion in potential revenue by mismanaging the racetrack slots program and focus on finding solutions to the real problems that Ontario is facing."

I agree with this, affix my name and send it down with Fiona.

#### WORKPLACE INSURANCE

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas, beginning January 1, 2013, the WSIB was expanded to include groups of employers and principals who had previously been exempt from the WSIB and had private insurance; and

"Whereas this new financial burden does nothing to improve worker safety and only drives up the cost of doing business in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the statutory obligations created by Bill 119."

I'm pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with page Eve.

#### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I continue to get these petitions into our office—and I have them here—to stop the tire fee increases.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship's eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

"Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

"Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

"Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

"Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship's fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs."

I affix my signature.

#### LYME DISEASE

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to share a petition that I continue to receive in my office, and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the tick-borne illness known as chronic Lyme disease, which mimics many catastrophic illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, Crohn's, Alzheimer's, arthritic diabetes, depression, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, is increasingly endemic in Canada, but scientifically validated diagnostic tests and treatment choices are currently not available in Ontario, forcing patients to seek these in the USA and Europe; and

"Whereas the Canadian Medical Association informed the public, governments and the medical profession in the May 30, 2000, edition of their professional journal that Lyme disease is endemic throughout Canada, particularly in southern Ontario; and

"Whereas the Ontario public health system and the Ontario Health Insurance Plan currently do not fund those specific tests that accurately serve the process of establishing a clinical diagnosis, but only recognize testing procedures known in the medical literature to provide false negatives 45% to 95% of the time;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the Minister of Health to direct the Ontario public health system and OHIP to include all currently available and scientifically verified tests for acute and chronic Lyme diagnosis, to do everything necessary to create public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario, and to have internationally developed diagnostic

and successful treatment protocols available to patients and physicians.”

I’ve met with these people. I agree with their petition and I’ll send it to the desk with Shruti.

### SHINGLES VACCINE

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas one in three Ontarians will experience shingles in their lifetime; and

“Whereas shingles is a painful and stressful condition; and

“Whereas a vaccine is available for preventing shingles and is recommended for all seniors; and

“Whereas the shingles vaccine is currently not covered by OHIP;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To ensure the shingles vaccine is covered under OHIP for all Ontarians.”

I agree with the petition. I will be signing it and handing it off to page Brendan.

### TIRE DISPOSAL

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** “Stop the tire fee increases.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has approved massive increases to Ontario Tire Stewardship’s eco fees for agricultural tires, increasing some fees from \$15.29 to \$352.80, \$546.84 or \$1,311.24;

“Whereas Ontario imposes tire eco fees that are dramatically higher than those in other provinces;

1610

“Whereas other provincial governments either exempt agricultural tires from recycling programs or charge fees only up to \$75;

“Whereas these new fees will result in increased costs for our farmers and lost sales for our farm equipment dealerships;

“Whereas the PC caucus has proposed a new plan that holds manufacturers and importers of tires responsible for recycling, but gives them the freedom to work with other businesses to find the best way possible to carry out that responsibility;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Please suspend the decision to significantly increase Ontario Tire Stewardship’s fees on agricultural and off-the-road tires pending a thorough impact study and implementation of proposals to lower costs.”

It’s signed by many people in my riding, and I’ll hand it to page Megan.

### ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the government of Ontario’s newly created Ontario College of Trades is planning to hit hard-working tradespeople with membership fees that, if the college has its way, will add up to \$84 million a year; and

“Whereas the Ontario College of Trades has no clear benefit and no accountability as tradespeople already pay for licences and countless other fees to government; and

“Whereas Ontario has struggled for years to attract people to skilled trades and the planned tax grab will kill jobs, and drive people out of trades;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the job-killing trades tax and shut down the Ontario College of Trades immediately.”

I’m pleased to affix my signature and send it to the table with Fiona.

### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I have a petition here from the community of Walkerton that reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the province of Ontario has closed historic jails in Walkerton and other rural Ontario municipalities resulting in loss of employment and heritage buildings to be vacated; and

“Whereas the province of Ontario is committed to job creation and economic development in rural Ontario communities and the preservation of heritage resources; and

“Whereas the provincial Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has indicated a desire to establish a provincial correctional museum and memorial to showcase the history, heritage and legacy of our correctional institutions;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Liberal government support the establishment of the Province of Ontario Correctional Museum in the historic 1866 Bruce County jail in Walkerton and instruct the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, to begin discussions with the municipality of Brockton.”

I do agree with this petition. I affix my signature and send it to the table with Gabriel.

### LANDFILL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have here a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas many of the resources of this planet are finite and are necessary to sustain both life and the quality of life for all future generations;

“Whereas the disposal of resources in landfills creates environmental hazards which will have significant human and financial costs for;

“Whereas all levels of government are elected to guarantee their constituents’ physical, financial, emotional and mental well-being;



"Whereas the health risks to the community and watershed increase in direct relationship to the proximity of any landfill site;

"Whereas the placement of a landfill in a limestone quarry has been shown to be detrimental;...

"Whereas the county of Oxford has passed a resolution requesting a moratorium on landfill construction or approval;

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, humbly petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"To implement a moratorium in Oxford county on any future landfill construction or approval until such time as a full review of alternatives has been completed which would examine best practices in other jurisdictions around the world;

"That this review of alternatives would give special emphasis on (a) practices which involve the total recycling or composting of all products currently destined for landfill sites in Ontario and (b) the production of goods which can efficiently and practically be recycled or reused so as not to require disposal in landfills."

I affix my signature to the petition.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PROSPEROUS AND FAIR ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2013

#### LOI DE 2013 POUR UN ONTARIO PROSPÈRE ET ÉQUITABLE (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2013, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 65, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / *Projet de loi 65, Loi visant à mettre en œuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Before I start my remarks in a different tone this afternoon, I want to extend my appreciation to the remarks by all members for the member from Essex, Bruce Crozier, and his wife. I specifically want to thank the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. I was moved to tears, actually, because I did know Bruce and Joan, and Ted summarized a fine reputation of 18 years here at Queen's Park.

From that tone, I'll move on to the next tone. It's out of respect.

I'm following up on the comments made by the member from Thornhill. I did sit with him and watch his comments yesterday in his leadoff remarks, and he was kind enough to offer me the opportunity to speak about the situation Ontario finds itself in on Bill 65.

I think context is always important, to let the people of Ontario know precisely where we are. The context is—we often say it, but we don't frame it up properly. We

just go into a bit of a rant on some of the scandals that are ongoing.

I think it's important to recognize that in the 10 years under Premier McGuinty's and Premier's Wynne's time here, we've moved the actual accumulated debt—this is important for the young people here, because this is future taxes. The debt in these 10 years has moved from \$139 billion—that's like a mortgage on your house—to \$273 billion. They've doubled the accumulated debt, so actually they're living on the credit card. When you can't afford the quality of life you have today—which we all want—but you want to fake it, you put it on the credit card. So that's what the accumulated debt is.

But if you look at provincial spending on a broader scale, what is that spending for? Is it any better in our local hospitals? No, it isn't. In fact, there are layoffs I will go through here. Is it any better on our highways? We've got congestion coming out our ears. Where is it any better? The children's aid societies are all in deficit. Name for me—the Toronto schools are accused of spending \$100 million in sort of scandalous spending. Name one thing that's better. I can't think of one, unfortunately.

Now, I'm not saying Ontarians are to blame. I'm putting the blame squarely on a government that has no plan, no ability to manage a large and important province, the largest province in the whole federation of Canada—and we're behind almost all of the other provinces. That's the context that you have to put these remarks in.

And don't just listen to me. This is the summary of what I see. The spending level has doubled as well. The spending basically started off just this brief last couple of years, and it has gone to the point now where—it has basically doubled from 2003 up to now; it's \$130 billion.

When I look at those things, I say, "How do we finance all this spending?" Well, it's the debt I talked about, and they still—even this year, the deficit is a good place to talk about. Operationally, they had a deficit of \$14 billion in 2010. Then they had another deficit in 2011 of \$13 billion. Then they had another deficit in 2012—this year.

Now, it's down this year to \$9.8 billion. We all thought it was going to be \$14 billion, and you sort of ask—you look back, and there's a lot of one-time revenue generations that are savings. They're really cutting off entitlements to public sector employees. They don't know it yet; a lot of the younger ones don't. These are pensions and other things that are being hollowed out. They're stealing money—pardon me—taking money from every program they can find.

Now, if you look at next year, the deficit is up again. They're back on the spending spree. I think we should be putting an end to it, is what we should be doing. We should be bringing forward the confidence motion by our leader, Tim Hudak; our House leader, Jim Wilson; and Steve Clark.

This is a serious, serious time for Ontario. If you want to know the outcomes in the future, look to the outcomes in the past. Past behaviour is a great predictor of future

behaviour, and I just outlined it for you. It's nothing but deficits and debt and spending.

Now, again, they're shaking their heads. I see their House leader over there, who is the worst House leader ever. I hear that every day—I didn't say it, but it's a term that I hear—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Durham, withdraw that statement.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, I don't have—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Never mind “well.” Withdraw.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I don't have evidence.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Withdraw.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Now, I want to put a few things on the record here that still aren't clear in the minds of the people of Ontario.

I'm talking and having a conversation—that's another term I hear a lot. I'm having a conversation with the people of Ontario. Ask yourself, are you any better off? Ask yourself, where's the budget going, the \$126 billion—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** —yes, \$127 billion; that's what it is. Where is it going? Well, almost 60% of it is wages and benefits; that's where it's going.

Now, what's the first expenditure? To understand this—Mr. Speaker, I appreciate you cutting me off on that rant I was on there, but the first and most important one is health care. We'll get into a bit of what's happening there. That's the biggest expenditure. In fact, with an aging population, including myself, it is an important expenditure.

1620

The second one is education, and I suspect that we could do better there. I really do feel that we could do better; and I would say that we move into a knowledge-based economy. For the people of Ontario, what's the third-largest expenditure?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Servicing the debt, paying off the credit card. They're not paying it off—no, no. The third-largest is paying off the credit card, the monthly payment thing. If there's not enough money to buy food, you have to pay off the debt of the food you've already eaten and spent. It's tragic.

I look at the budget in a different way, I think. I look at where some of the risks are in future program money. It's important to put into context here—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I have a little time left; I don't really want to be interrupted if I can help it.

They made a deal. There was a secret backroom deal made with the NDP, as far as I understand. This has been verified by the media; I have clippings on that. The deal was that there were three things they wanted. The three things they wanted were—now the leader of the NDP,

Ms. Horwath, is questioning whether or not they're going to deliver.

The Liberals have won every election by promising something: closing the coal plants in, I think it was, 2003? They haven't closed one. Ten years later, they haven't closed one. They've shut the economy down so you don't use them—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, they haven't.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** No, I know they have.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** No, they're still up. They're all up there. Phil, you'll have two minutes when you get it.

The next promise they made is that they won't raise your taxes. Well, they're the highest ever in the history of this province.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Aren't they called revenue tools now?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, that's the new transit thing. My member from Huron-Bruce, she's right. Those are promises yet to be made, but they're coming. You can count on it. These revenue tools that were spoken of are important.

But the third one was reducing auto insurance by 15%. There's absolutely no method of how they're going to do it, and if the NDP sign that cheque, they're being fooled.

**Interjection:** You didn't read it. Before you say—

**Mr. John O'Toole:** There's no method; I'm sorry. What they're going to do is cut the statutory accident benefits and move all the costs to the consumer when they go to court to get your money. That's how it's going to be paid for. It's going to be all moved to the courts through tort, and your entitlements under statutory accident benefits, or the number of entitlements you're entitled to—but the Liberals are used to saying, “I'm entitled to my entitlements.”

But here's the other part: Ms. Horwath is now saying she needs proof that she can get these deliverables. We'll see about the proof; I can't for one moment trust a thing they say. The most important evidence there for me—why I get so disheartened—is that I listen to the arguments every day on the Ornge helicopter scandal, just a tragic waste of health care dollars. Imagine what we could have done with those millions and millions—hundreds of millions—of dollars.

That's just one example. Don't even talk about the gas plants, because that's not \$500 million, it's not \$800 million—it's a billion dollars. It's a billion dollars, and where is it going to show up? In your electricity bill. Look on there; there's a little number on there. That number is going to get bigger. It's going to be the highest energy costs in North America.

They just lost a ruling with the World Trade Organization on Bill 150. They couldn't manage their way in a two-car funeral. I just can't believe this government gets away with it. Honest to God, I'm shocked and saddened by the performance of the current government. They obfuscate and avoid telling the truth about anything.

It's so evident, when the gas plants—our member Vic Fedeli, the energy critic, has done a marvelous job, as has



John Yakabuski, our former critic on that file. It's true, if I even look at the clippings; what I'm going to do is go straight to—these aren't prepared notes, because I don't have any prepared notes, but I do read the paper. We get the paper every day. All members get them; they're called the clippings. I'm just going to flip through the clippings. What have they been saying about the party? These aren't written by our leader, Tim Hudak.

The very first one—this is the first one; I think the member from Ottawa—Orléans should look up here. This is from the Toronto Star, which we would refer to as their briefing notes. Here's the headline—I'm not making this up, Mr. Speaker; I'll submit this to Hansard—"Hospitals Face More Spending Cuts." Now, here's what it says: Last year, Ontario's—were frozen at \$17 billion. This year, they're moving the money—it says, "Community, Home Care Get Boost, But Patients Still Lose Out, Critics Say." This is by the critics.

Now, pay attention. They have no plan. They're just moving the money from the hospitals to the community. They say, "Well, it's going to be called aging at home." No, no, no, it's aging alone. That's what it is: aging alone.

You can't get home care now. In fact, the most number of hours you can get, I think, right now is 12, and I think they're moving it to 14 hours. That's a convenient number. That's two hours a day: one hour to get up, and one hour to put them to bed. That's home care in Ontario today. It's tragic.

The nurses—I'm meeting the nurses in three of the hospitals in my riding, with our critic, Christine Elliott. We're at Whitby in the morning, Whitby psychiatric hospital, or mental health hospital. Then we're at the Uxbridge hospital, Port Perry and the Bowmanville hospital. All of those hospitals have deficits. Check out with your riding. They all have operating deficits. You don't see it, because it's a line of credit, and they have to pay the interest on the line of credit. All of them are in deficit.

And why? I want to tell you why. The Auditor General—here's his report. Auditor General, what are they doing in hospitals? Hospitals? We're getting 7.1% a year from 2003—this is the auditors, not me—to 2011. What are they going to get in the future if they're going to 3.6%? That's half. Where does their budget go? For pills? No, salaries; it's nurses. They're laying them off. Then it will be the caretakers. With all the hospitals, they have C. difficile.

Education is being moved from 4.8% over the last five years, 10 years, to 3%. Post-secondary training—they're cutting to support the debt they're creating in the province of Ontario.

Our member, our critic from Thornhill has done a marvellous job. He has outlined the scandalous relationship with the NDP—\$1.5 billion, I think, was the payoff. That's the payoff for the NDP: \$1.5 billion. I have the greatest respect for Michael Prue. I've been on committees with him for years. I hope he turns it down. Do the right thing. Go to the people of Ontario and ask, "Do

you think they're doing the right thing?" Read the paper. Look at what's happening.

This is about the jobs that are being shed in Ontario. Everybody can't work for the government. Do you understand? I think the Liberals think that's the case. They just hire more public servants and everything will be fine.

But I'm saddened and disappointed by this budget. I can't ever see myself or our leader, Tim Hudak, supporting it, because they've proven to me over 10 years that they haven't got a plan. They're skating around the issues, and not just on the gas plants; they still haven't got a plan for most of the major challenges.

I'm going to say a last thing, that transit is the next debate. Metrolinx wants an additional \$50 billion of new money, new tax money, and they're going to get their revenue from these things they call revenue tools. Now, what are revenue tools? Revenue tools are new taxes: development charges, lot levies, tolls on highways, on gas, on parking—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you.

**Mr. John O'Toole:**—and just plain more taxes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The member from Durham says that he has been doing some reading, which is great, because you should have read the budget before you said, "No, no, no."

You say that you care about those priorities that you've put forward, like jobs, like health care, like education. But you didn't try to make it work. You didn't try to make it better.

So now, afterwards, you've negotiated your way not only away from the table, but you're out of the room. You might as well not be in the building, because you're not doing your job. You abdicated your responsibility as opposition members to make a minority government work. That's what the people of this province want. The people want politicians to work harder. They want them to work harder, not less. They don't want them to throw their hands—they don't want to see lazy politicians saying, "You know what? We just can't do it anymore." So you missed your opportunity.

We, of course, have a different approach. We came to the table. We had five asks. Home care: You say that you care about home care. We put a five-day home care guarantee in for consideration in the budget. It's there. We put something on auto insurance, on affordability. Parts of it are there; not all of it is there. So we're going to continue to work.

1630

Today, we introduced a new office called the financial accountability office to make sure that Ornge doesn't happen again, which makes sure eHealth doesn't happen again, which makes sure gas plants don't happen again.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** You say you care about it, but you're not doing anything about it. We on this side of the House are going to try, because when we go back to the

people, we can prove to them that we are standing up for them, that we understand what they need. This side of the House is truly the only party who understands the people of this province and who are trying to make it work at Queen's Park.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, it is always fun to follow the member from Durham. Any relationship between fact and the member from Durham's speeches should be taken as being entirely coincidental. He asked something about secret backrooms where, allegedly, there was a deal between Liberals and the NDP, but my colleague from Beaches—East York—I went over and I asked rhetorically, “Did I miss something here?” He said, “That secret backroom: That was the meeting rooms here in the Legislature where the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs meets.” That's where the NDP decided, “We'd actually like to work in this Parliament and see whether or not we can come up with a budget for all Ontarians.” They actually put an agenda on the table. We said, “Okay; we understand who sent us here, and we understand why we were sent here. Let's see if we can work together.”

Let's see. What did the Conservatives put on the table? Um, nothing. They decided to vote against the budget before they read it—before they read it. They're irrelevant; simply irrelevant.

Let's look at what this budget does do in my community in western Mississauga. It is the end of GTA pooling: \$36 million a year that we had six years ago—gone. Mississauga and Brampton don't pay that. Property tax bills covering land ambulance, court security, Ontario Drug Benefit and Ontario Disability Support are now completely phased out, gone. Mississauga and Brampton: Your property taxes now go a lot further, courtesy of what this budget and this government and everybody that has chosen to work with this government has done for you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I want to thank my colleague from Durham for his insightful comments on the budget. Speaker, he gets it. He gets it that when you're talking about an \$11.7-billion deficits and you're talking about \$273-billion net debts, the formula cannot work. It cannot continue.

What we've been advocating in the PC Party is a change in direction on the way that this province is going. You just can't continue to spend yourself out—you can't spend yourself out of a hole, Speaker. You've got to manage yourself out of a hole; you can't spend yourself out of a hole. That's what this government seems to continue wanting to do.

I say to the comments of the member from Kitchener—Waterloo, chastising the member for Durham: How could we, in good conscience, support a budget that does nothing to address the jobs crisis in this province? It's only about kicking tough decisions down the road for

another day and for another generation to have to face them. That is wrong thinking, Speaker.

If you want to change the fortunes of Ontario long-term, you've got to actually start to do something. You can't hope and pray and try to buy your way into the homes of people across the province by currying favour here or currying favour there; a special program here, a special program there. The next thing you know, we will never be able to get out of this mess.

That's how it started in the European countries that have gone to the dogs. They just felt they could continue to spend and that they would somehow miraculously get out of the hole. That's not the way it worked there. Now they've got disaster zones. It's not the way it's going to work in Ontario.

If you don't have the strength, the moral fortitude, to stand up and take the heat and make the right decisions today, then everybody down the road will pay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I will have my own one-hour in a few minutes, but I did want to comment on yesterday's speech by my colleague the member from Thornhill. He is my colleague and, I trust, my friend. We sit on different sides of many, many issues. He did speak for some 45 minutes yesterday, talking about the Conservative position around the budget.

I listened intently to what he had to say because I wanted to hear whether he had direct criticisms of various portions of the budget that he either liked or didn't like. He described it all succinctly, in a couple of sentences. It didn't matter to him, he said, what was contained within the budget because they were going to vote against it anyway.

The budget itself is not the relevant issue for him and, I think, for his party. The relevant issue for them is the gas plants. Let's be very real: The relevant issue for them is that they think the Liberal government is not up to snuff, ought to be defeated, and they are using the budget as that opportunity, should their motion not be successful, in order to defeat the government.

I don't blame them for it. I understand that point of view very well. I've heard that point of view from many of my own constituents. But the reality is that if we are going to talk about what is contained within the budget, if we are to separate them at all—and I think we have an obligation to do so on behalf of our constituents—then a rational and reasoned argument needs to be made over what portions of this budget the Conservatives are opposed to.

In speaking to my own constituents, I have not yet really heard too much opposition about the budget itself. I've heard many, many comments about the wastage of money. I've heard many comments about the incompetence of government around eHealth, gas plants, Ornge and everything else.

I'm still waiting to hear Conservatives speak about what it is they do not like in the budget. I know what they don't like about government. Let's hear the other side.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Durham has two minutes.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I just want to acknowledge the emergency responders who were here listening today. I think of those who put their lives down and the government that's basically not there for them, even though the minister spoke rather eloquently today.

I recognize the member from Kitchener—Waterloo—she's new here. She means well, but she has drunk the Kool-Aid. Unfortunately, she thinks by hiring another bureaucrat, you can actually solve the auto insurance policy—I don't think so.

The member from Mississauga—Streetsville is on the record as saying that they had no idea how much they were going to spend because it's sort of like a space shot. He's on the record there, so you can dismiss that.

The member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke summarized it very well. We've got to change directions. Our leader isn't so much voting against Charles Sousa—a nice fellow—or the Minister of Finance, I should say. He would have done anything to get that job. In fact, he threw Sandra Pupatello under the bus.

Here's the real issue. We're voting against the Liberal strategy. We're voting again the Liberal plan. We've got to change directions.

There are two ministers here. There are no backbenchers except Phil.

All I'm saying is, they've got to change directions. Ontario is hemorrhaging money. We're spending about a million dollars each and every hour more than we take in. Isn't it a symptom of reckless, careless, thoughtless spending? I've got the plan for you right here. This is the commission on reform by Don Drummond. In this book, do you know what he said? You have a structural deficit. Put on the brakes and turn around before you go over the cliff. We're in serious trouble in Ontario.

I think of my constituents in the riding of Durham, which is Uxbridge, Scugog and Clarington—these are the people who are going to have to pay the money out of their pockets for the problems they have created. It's sad.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It's a delight to stand up here today and to speak.

To my Conservative colleagues who were cheering me on yesterday, I hope you're cheering me on by the time I finish the one hour.

This is my opportunity to talk about what I think the economic circumstances are in this province, to give the government some guidance, to talk about the budget bill and to talk about some of the other political events of this time.

I'd like to start off with the economic conditions because I think we need to look at where Ontario is today. I look through this, A Prosperous and Fair Ontario, these 314 pages, and I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is important that every member of this Legislature attempts to read all or most of it.

## 1640

The day the prosperous and fair Ontario budget was brought down, there were many in the press who came running up to me immediately and said: "Are you voting for this budget or against it?" The answer was a very simple one, that we needed some time to read it. I think that anybody who is doing their job in this place and is trying to understand how \$120 billion is spent needs to take the few hours that it takes to read that entire document; needs to absorb what is contained therein; needs to look at Bill 65, which is the compendium to the budget request; needs to look at all of the bills and all of the acts that are going to have to be changed; how it's going to be implemented; what is amendable, what is not; and then a decision has to be made.

We in the New Democratic Party went a step further, and I think it's an important step to take. Not only do we have to read this, but we also have to talk to people and see what they think. When this Legislature was shut down for four months, many people, I am sure, went home, went on holidays, went fishing, did whatever they wanted to do. I know even myself, I took a day off and I painted part of the house. It was good to have a day off. But I want to tell you what I also did and what members of the New Democratic Party did. We went into our ridings and we went to other ridings all across this province, and we asked people: "What do you want to see in the upcoming budget? This Legislature is going to go back. We're going to have to do some work. What is it you want to see? What hopes and dreams do you have? What are the things that are important to you?"

People told us over those four months hundreds of things that they wanted done. It was impossible to contain all the hundreds of asks in a single request to the government at the time that the budget was brought down, but it was possible for us to come up with six or seven really good ideas that we thought would improve the lives of everyday Ontarians, ideas that they thought were important to them and ideas that they wanted us to bring forward. We have done that.

Before I get into those ideas, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the economic circumstances in which we find ourselves. Because as I read A Prosperous and Fair Ontario, as I listened to the Premier, as I listened to the Minister of Finance, it seems to me that these members of this Legislature look at the world through pretty rose-coloured or Liberal-red glasses, because what they want to see is an ever-improving economy here in Ontario, things getting so much better—our trade deficits being wiped out, trade with the United States going up, jobs galore everywhere there is. That's what they have contained here within the body of the budget.

But you have to dig down to look at what the reality is, what we can probably expect and what the budget has to mirror. First of all, real GDP growth in Ontario is going to be stuck at 1.5%—that's the forecast for this year and maybe slightly more for next year; 1.5% GDP growth is basically treading water. It does not really produce the kinds of things and the kinds of oomph that

people are looking for in terms of expansion, in terms of our budgets, in terms of job creation, in terms of extra money for families. It does not contain it. Anyone, including my colleagues across the aisle in the Liberal Party, who says that things are getting better—the forecast is for 1.5% GDP growth, which is one of the lowest growth rates that Ontario has experienced since the Second World War. This is not a time when we are into expansion, and the government needs to tell people that we are not into expansion. They need to tell people that what they are going to do is going to help and not hinder their efforts to find affordability and jobs and security.

The second thing it says—and this is very interesting as well—is that private sector growth is going to be 1.6%. What that means is that public sector growth is going to be under that, and it also means that there will probably not be much of an expansion in public sector expenditures. As you look through the budget, you'll see that that is in fact the case. But having private sector growth at 1.6% says and should say a lot to the members opposite in the Liberal Party. It should tell them that when you have an anemic private sector growth of 1.6%, even though all kinds of efforts have been made over the last 10 years with the Liberals in office, all kinds of efforts to pump more and more money into the private sector, to take away all the tax expenditures they used to have to make to government, to make them fabulously rich—it is not having any real growth within the private sector.

In fact, private sector growth is lagging behind even those countries in Europe which faced catastrophic conditions this past year, and well behind the United States. Giving more money in tax breaks is not working. The government needs to start thinking about this when you look at that kind of anemic growth. We in Ontario who are trying to help people find jobs need to find other alternatives than what the government has set out in A Prosperous and Fair Ontario.

They have a dream. The dream is that 2014 is going to see this rebound. I heard this last year; last year, they said 2013. And 2012 was going to be a rebound, and 2011 was going to be a rebound. This year the rebound is not too high. It's up to 2.3%, which is still, even if that happens, even if some miracle happens and their rose-coloured glasses suddenly catch fire, well below the average growth rates of Ontario for the last 50 years.

So they talk about how this is going to be fueled on the stronger exports to the United States of America. I want to say that this too is a dream that is contained within their budget; this dream that they have is not likely to happen. Exports have declined to the United States—a combination of factors. The high cost of energy makes our products much more expensive. The Canadian dollar at or near par has made it much more expensive. The household net worth in the United States has not yet come back to where it was in 2007. So even though there has been some growth in that country, they are still worse off today than they were in 2007, and they are definitely not looking to us to provide exports to them in anything except energy.

**Interjection:** Made-in-the-USA policy.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** They have made-in-the-United States policies, as my colleague behind me just said. It's absolutely true that they buy American first, that the States are all into a whole thing about protecting their own jobs. In fact, their job growth rate is eclipsing ours as a result. We're not doing the same thing; we're trying to be good neighbours. We're trying not to get involved in that kind of stuff, and we've argued this in the Legislature before. But please, please—you know, the Liberals are saying that this is going to solve our dilemma; it's not there at all.

In four years, the government says they've created 400,000 net new jobs. The government of Ontario says that unemployment is going to go down to 6.6% by next year. I think that there is a dream here, a dream that is not likely to be realized. The unemployment rate in Ontario has been stuck in the 7% and 8% area for a long time. It does not appear, given that companies in Ontario are holding on to their money and not creating jobs, that the government is going to have any success at all in realizing this dream of a 6.6% unemployment rate for 2014. There is an anemic 0.8% 2012 forecast that's going up to 1.5% or maybe to 2% by 2014-16 in terms of growth.

Household debt in this country is rising. People have less money to spend. Household debt: According to A Prosperous and Fair Ontario, it's the first time in postwar history that it is actually past the United States of America. Ontarians owe more household debt than the average American does—first time it's ever happened in our entire history. It is at 150% today of disposable income. Who is going to buy the goods and services you say are going to be created by your policies?

When I talk to ordinary people, when I'm out there in the finance committee, in my own constituency, around the province, people say they don't have the money. That's why they complain about the sky-high electricity rates. That's why they complain about all of the government programs that cost them too much money. They complain about the cost of gasoline. They complain about the cost of taxes. They complain about everything because their disposable income is no longer there. They're in debt. They're maxed out. The credit cards can't take any more.

**1650**

If you also look at A Prosperous and Fair Ontario—and then I'm going to get on to the actual budget containment. Personal income tax: If you look at what the government is saying is going to happen between the year 2012-13, which is this year, personal income tax is going to net the government \$26.1 billion, but by 2015-16, there's going to be a huge increase, according to them, in personal income tax—up to \$30.6 billion. Somehow, magically, they expect that the ordinary people who can't find jobs, who are struggling—the manufacturing sector is anemic. It's suddenly going to increase by \$4.5 billion in the next couple of years. Maybe if everybody had jobs, maybe if everything went really well, maybe



that would happen, but look what happens in the same book—the same couple of pages.

Corporate taxation in Ontario, which is today at \$12 billion and has declined from some \$18 billion in the last few years, is going to be reduced to \$11.3 billion by 2015-16 as the government continues to write down money to corporations, as the government recognizes the \$1.3 billion that is a giveaway for fancy meals, Blue Jays games and corporate boxes and stadiums. All of that is already written off, so the government has already recognized where their money is going to come from. It's going to come from ordinary people. The corporations who have not delivered hardly any jobs in this economy at all are going to get even more money to sock away or to send to the Cayman Islands, which is where much of it is today going.

This is the reality, and I ask the members: If you want to know what a budget is all about, take the time to read it. For the press, if anybody's listening to it, it takes a few days to read the 314 pages, all the compendium and everything else, to understand what it's really about.

It says here that there is a common goal, and I think we all have a common goal and I agree with that: that we have to build prosperity. We have a common goal that we need to build prosperity for everyone. For the members of this Legislature, for the people outside this Legislature, for students who are going to school and facing tough times, we need to have a common prosperity and to build that prosperity for every Ontarian, and we need to do so in every single region. It is not good enough when someone can say that Toronto or the Toronto area has some form of prosperity and then neglect the people of northern Ontario, neglect the people of Welland or neglect the people of Windsor, where the unemployment rate is at 12%—stubbornly at 12%. We need to have a common goal that is reflected across this entire province where every single person can have an opportunity for prosperity.

That's something we have to look at in terms of the budget. It's something that I would set out as the critic for the NDP and it's something that the NDP has set out in discussions with everyday Ontarians.

We have to approach this with ambition and optimism but, most importantly, with reality. The reality is that when you've seen 10 years of experimental stuff that isn't producing results, you have to change course a little bit.

I do not buy into the Conservatives. They want to switch the course the other way. They want to go back to the time of Reaganomics, with the trickle-down theory: Give more and more money to the rich and see if it trickles down. They have great faith in that. I don't know where it has ever worked, but they still continue to have faith in a Milton Friedman policy, which has been totally discredited everywhere in the world it has ever been tried.

We in the New Democratic Party tried to outline and did outline our challenges. We don't believe, as I said, in the Reagan-Thatcher dreams of trickle-down. We don't

believe in Milton Friedman. We have seen in countries where they have tried that, especially today in Great Britain, that there are actually riots in the street when people are unable to get jobs. We actually see there that there is a complete class distinction that has redeveloped from a country that had gone through some middle-class periods. But you see today the haves and the have-nots. We have seen it here in our own province when we had the 1% versus the 99% camp-outs, when we had people starting to talk about all the things that are happening here.

We can see in our own statistics, and I'm sure the government has them, and the Conservatives have them, too, where the rich keep getting richer and the poor—not so much the poor are getting poorer, but the middle class getting squeezed right out. That is, in fact, what has happened. We see here many advocate a race to the bottom.

I think that President Obama said it best in the United States: It's your right to work for less. When you talk about some of the solutions that my colleagues in the Conservative Party put forward day after day—like the right-to-work states or the right-to-work Ontario—it is the right to work for less money. It is the right to work in more unsafe circumstances. It is the right not to enjoy the fruits of your labour.

There is a growing gap, and a continuing gap, squeezing out the middle class. It is squeezing out, at the same time, the momentum that we should have in terms of an economy that needs to work for everyone. Surely, in my lifetime, I have seen bad economies; I have seen good economies. The good economies work amazingly well for people. It gives people an opportunity to lift themselves from poverty. It gives opportunities for new Canadians and for students to get that first job. It gives amazing opportunities for people to work and to save, to build for themselves and for their families and to buy houses and consumer goods. That is what we really need to do if we are going to have momentum and bring momentum back into the economy.

It also, I think—if we continue to do what we've done—squeezes the confidence out of equality. That is most troubling of all to me, because if we become a society in which you have haves and have-nots, if we become a society that has no middle class, then the social cohesion that has made Ontario a wonderful place to grow up and to live will be gone.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk, too, about the focus on the economy. We need good jobs. If the economy is going to work, the only thing that is going to make it work isn't to line the pockets of those who have a lot of money so that they can have more. It isn't right to have that money taken and put away in a sock or transferred to the Cayman Islands or to some other offshore place. The important thing is that the jobs have to be created, and real investment has to put money back into the economy; it cannot be hoarded.

On this one thing, I find myself in agreement with the finance minister of Canada. The Honourable Jim Flaherty

spent a long time here. He was the finance critic for the Conservatives for much of the time that I was the finance critic for the NDP. After he was the finance critic for the Conservatives and he left, the Leader of the Opposition—who is now the Leader of the Opposition—for a time became the finance critic for the Conservatives.

I've had a long time to discuss financial issues with them. I cannot always agree with them, but I do agree with Jim Flaherty today. I do agree that there is a lot of hoarding of money taking place in Canada. It's dead money. It is money that is not being used for a purpose that it should be used for. Jim Flaherty will be amongst the first to admit that his whole policy—the whole *raison d'être* of the Conservative Party in Canada is to give money, or to allow corporations to take money, on the mistaken belief that jobs will be created. If anyone is as disappointed as he is—obviously, I am. I'm disappointed.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** He's disappointed.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yes, he is disappointed as well in what he thought was going to be a policy that would create jobs, and, in fact, it has not created any.

We also have here in this province the high cost of electricity, which has driven jobs out. We know that in certain sectors of the economy—manufacturing, northern Ontario resource development—one of the key conditions that is driving factories and good-paying jobs out of Ontario is the high cost of electricity.

1700

We also know that productivity and growth have slowed in Ontario and that investment as a share of GDP has declined steadily over the last decade.

There's all the things. Now, what do we do? This is where the NDP got involved in all of this. This is where we sat down and thought, "This is the scenario. This is what is happening here in Ontario." It's not all doom and gloom. You have to look at some of the positive aspects. We have some of the brightest people in the world. We have an educated workforce. We have people who want to work. We have people who want to contribute. We have vibrant cities, although they're a little bit clogged with traffic. We have people with great intellectual potential. We have financial markets in part. We have great resources. What can we do as a people, given the circumstances that we have inherited from the Liberals? New Democrats went out and talked and thought we could do six or seven really important things to get the economy moving. That's what we were hoping to see and what, in part, to be fair, we did see within the body of this budget.

The first thing we asked for was some youth employment. We asked that money be spent. We only asked that—\$30 million or \$40 million, I believe, was our ask.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** No, not for youth.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** No, no, \$185 million. We asked for \$185 million to create some 60,000 jobs for youth unemployment in Ontario, because youth unemployment is stubbornly high. It's well above 12%, 14%. It's been there for a long time.

Young people coming out of university or college looking for that first job are stymied. They cannot find

the kind of work they need. They cannot find the kind of work that all of us in this chamber probably took for granted when we finished high school and university and went out to find that first job. Although it was difficult—I graduated during a bit of a recession myself in the early 1970s. There was a recession. It was not hopeless like today, where people are sending out hundreds and hundreds of resumés with no result.

I got a letter yesterday which I want to read in part into the record, with your permission, Mr. Speaker. I don't know whether the man is my constituent or not. It came by email, and all I have is a name, but it was heartfelt. Although it will take me a minute or two to read most of it, I want to do that, because this is the story of one young person, 28 years of age, with a degree from the London School of Economics and a whole range of experience both in this country and in Great Britain, who is here and cannot find a job. He's asking for us to do simple things. He wrote to me and he says the following:

"Dear Michael Prue, MPP Beaches—East York,

"As a member of your constituency, a recent graduate student and an unemployed youth, I would like to raise several issues with you. First off, I'd like to thank you for your service to the community. Second I'd like to tell you a story about myself that might make it clear to you the situation youth are in today." And I'm going to skip a little bit because it's a long letter.

He goes on: "After applying and graduating from university with a degree in sociology I applied to the London School of Economics to study with the top mind in my field. The program, M.Sc. biomedicine, bioscience and society, only took four social scientists that year, and I was one of them. Through a strange course of events I was able to find the funding necessary, and I worked hard to complete my degree.

"When I moved back to Canada, after a year in London spent watching the youth of a nation lash out in anger, saddled with a 45% youth unemployment rate, I thought things might be different at home. I thought that with my degree and an impeccable work ethic I might be able to obtain a decent-paying position outside of the restaurant industry, an industry that almost crushed my will six years prior. I was wrong.

"After six months with very little work and nearly no work pertaining to my area of expertise, I find myself now broke and on the verge of being homeless. I'm depressed, frustrated and dismayed at the hundreds of resumés I've sent out. I have yet to have one interview—not a single one. I am now forced to go back to school for a PhD in hopes of a chance to get a job when I come back again from London, UK, in three years. I'm smart enough and I show enough promise to get into a PhD program at King's College London, but apparently I can't get a job here, not even a summer job.

"The economy as I understand it is not doing too bad. Ontario is doing quite well and in fact there are plenty of jobs out there. The issue is, not a single company will train an individual or give them a chance without having some experience. How does one get experience? In the



health, research and policy industry you cannot get experience unless you already have experience. Why? Because no one is willing to hire someone out of school. I can list off a number of jobs I've been completely qualified for but had no response to due to lack of experience.

"Contrary to government belief this is not due to a lack of funding for on-the-job training or some nonsense like that. The more money you give to businesses or banks to train people, the more they will expect that money and come to rely on it. And so you have a situation like I'm in now; a talented, driven individual on the verge of homelessness.

"I'm fed up and tired of being told by the media and governments alike that so long as I play by the rules and follow the dotted lines I'll be okay and end up with a job. This is pitiful. I played by those rules; I followed the guidance put before me by governments and policy analysts. The fact is that I've been fed nonsense by individuals who are struggling to understand anything, let alone what the youth of today wants, needs or is feeling. We/I need help.

"You could start by taking large companies, organizations, not-for-profits and other entities and forcing them to hire at least a quarter new individuals without prior experience. If they want funding you could give them funding on a needs-first basis. If this seems unreasonable, you could remind them of the glut of individuals with post-secondary education coming onto the job market.

"You might also provide bridging grants to get students from idea to funding stages for small business ventures or social entrepreneurship opportunities. These could be set up in a fashion that would allow for the individual to pay these bridging funds back with grants attained in the future. I have an incredible idea for a social enterprise to help the homeless and mentally ill. Of course, by the time I finish all the plans (three quarters done now), I'll be homeless.

"If I can help you bring this message to your fellow members of Parliament please let me know. I of course have nothing to do right now except continue my endless submission of resumé's and cover letters." And it's signed.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I read this letter out is because there is a frustration out there. There is a frustration of young people. There is a frustration of what is called the Y generation, or now the millennium generation, which are seeing the opportunities that they had grown up and expected their whole lives, the opportunities that their parents had spoken about, not coming to any kind of fruition.

I watch in dismay as the government of this country, with some help from Ontario, hires foreign workers. I'm not opposed to foreign workers—I don't think any of us are opposed to foreign workers—but when there are 100,000 brought into Ontario to take jobs and you have people here who are willing and able to work, one has to question the rationality behind all of this, and I think the only rationality that we could know of is the fact that they can be and are paid 15% less for taking the job.

We need to start looking at how we hire the people who live here. How do we give them work? How do we encourage them? How do we encourage this young man to stay in Ontario and give of his expertise to us? He was one of only four people in this new course, biomedical science, chosen at the London School of Economics, and he excelled at it. And yet there's nothing for him to do here.

We in the NDP came up with a program, \$195 million. We came up with the program—and we're happy that part of that program made it into the budget—to give people an opportunity by having businesses paid to hire or given money to hire people on a six-month basis, with the expectation that a full-time, permanent job would be there at the end. We agreed with what was contained in the budget. It was our idea. You know, it's one of the things that need to go forward.

Unemployment among young people is stubborn. Unemployment among all Ontarians is stubborn, and I have had letters as well from people in their 50s who lose their jobs when their factory shuts down and quite literally have no real chance of gaining meaningful employment again.

1710

We went on to talk about barriers to employment, and it was another one of the things we asked for. We agree with the government that allowing people who are on ODSP to keep the first \$200 of the monies that they earn ought to be allowed. This was a recommendation of the Frances Lankin-Munir Sheikh report, and it is a good recommendation. One of the things we asked for was \$200—and I'm not convinced that that's the right amount, but I'm willing to start with that, but \$200 goes a long way to encouraging people to go out and get that job.

I have often spoken in this place about the money that we claw back from individuals on ODSP, and one of the most egregious things I have ever encountered in my life is the fact that this government, for the last 10 years, has clawed back money from people who are on ODSP because they were born with developmental difficulties. We know that there are people who work in this province, who give their utmost, who are proud of what they do and what they accomplish, who have abilities to do some forms of work. We have all seen wonderful enterprises like Common Ground's Lemon and Allspice, through which people with developmental disabilities serve coffee and baked goods. They have baked goods that they make and sell in many of the downtown office buildings. They make a small living, they're on ODSP, and yet we have clawed back their money.

We know of people born with Down syndrome who go out and work, who sweep floors in restaurants, who stock shelves in some of the bigger grocery stores and who work in enlightened establishments—I see them occasionally in places like Tim Hortons and Starbucks coffee—and we claw back their money. I find this atrocious. I find it appalling that we take money off people with Down syndrome who go out and get a job. I

find this shameful beyond belief, and I am happy that, for the first time, we're going to allow them to keep the first \$200.

It's only a start. It's not enough, but it is something that an enlightened society needs to do because we need to encourage everyone—everyone—to go out and get a job, to do whatever they can do, to make whatever contributions they can make to this society. We need to encourage them to do it and to have something at the end of the day.

With \$200 a month and the maximum amount that an individual is allowed on ODSP, which is about \$1,100 a month, that will take them up to \$1,300 a month or about \$16,000 a year, and they'll be \$4,000 under the poverty level, even when we allow them to keep this. Think about that. We are condemning them to an entire life of living in poverty, and I would hope that even though this \$200 is a small amount, it is the start of something much more. We need to make sure that people have an opportunity to escape from poverty. Being born with a disability, or developing a disability through accident or disease, should not, in and of itself, be an automatic condemnation to a lifetime of poverty.

At the same time, and I commend the government for this—the NDP did not ask for it, but we could have and we should have: to allow high school students to keep the money that they earn without having it included in their family's ODSP or Ontario Works monies. It's only fair that they go out and make their own money. They need the money if they're going to put themselves through school and for all the other things, and it's about time. I commend as well Frances Lankin and Munir Sheikh for including that in their report and for it being in this budget.

I'd like to talk next about corporate tax loopholes, one of the favourites of NDPers all the time. We are taking so much less money from corporate taxation than we did 10 years ago, and I've seen members of the Liberal government and some members of the Conservatives talk about what a good thing this is. If those corporate taxes had not been cut back 10 years ago and were allowed to be even at the same rate as at the time Mike Harris cut them back, we would have about another \$8 billion or \$10 billion in the coffers. We would have no deficit—no deficit at all.

So when that money is taken away, when that money goes to a place where the government doesn't know where it is and when that money goes to a place where the federal government doesn't know where it is, when it languishes in some account in the Cayman Islands or some other place—Solomon Islands is another good place; I don't want to pick on the Cayman Islands alone; there are many of these corporate tax havens around the world—when it sits there and when it just increases corporate profit, it's not helping the people of Ontario, any good at all. Had we continued to tax them at the same rate as Mike Harris lowered it to in 1995, we would have \$8 billion or \$10 billion more a year, we would have no deficit, and we would have a whole lot healthier economy.

We in the NDP want to talk about corporate tax rates. The government said they were going to do something about it, but what did they do? They eliminated the employer health tax exemption of \$400,000 on companies earning \$5 million, which the NDP asked for. First of all, you would say that's a pretty good thing for all those companies that don't need it; the big banks, the large corporations—they don't need that \$400,000 exemption. However, they increased the exemption for small business. I don't really have that much of a problem leaving it at \$400,000, but they increased it to \$450,000 on \$5 million, which meant there was no new money for the treasury. It meant it was revenue-neutral. I don't have problems keeping things revenue-neutral if there's a good reason for it, but I have yet to hear the government explain what that good reason was. There could have been hundreds of millions of dollars within the treasury to be used for purposes that we need, and it's not there.

The government also said that they're talking to the federal government about the whole problem that we are experiencing here in Ontario and in Canada of corporate profits being shifted around the country and outside of the country. One of the favourite things that corporations do, of course, is that they're headquartered here in Ontario—their largest facilities, whether they be manufacturing, business or anything else are located in Ontario—but when you see the federal tax being paid at the end, almost all of them claim that their profits come from Alberta. The reason they claim their profits come from Alberta, even though the money's all made here, is because they pay less taxes there.

This is something we need to work on. This is something we have asked the government of Ontario to work on, and we did get a promise in this budget. We got a promise that they're going to study it. I've been here 12 years—two years of Conservatives, 10 years of Liberals—and all I ever hear is that they're going to study it. This problem has been studied to death.

What it needs is some real action. It needs the government of Ontario and the governments of the other provinces to sit down and to force, to acquiesce or to do whatever they have to do with the federal government that says a dollar made in Canada is a dollar made in Canada, and that it should be taxed in the place where it's earned or, at least, the average tax of the places across Canada in which the corporations are located. In Ontario, even though we have the lowest taxes on corporations, we don't have the lowest taxes overall; therefore, we are bleeding a lot of money to provinces that have different tax structures—and, by the way, governments that probably don't need the corporate taxation quite as much as we do because they're sitting on trillions of dollars of oil revenue.

We've got the whole problem of the underground economy. God knows we need to do something about that, but the Liberal government, several years ago, got rid of our tax department here in Ontario, so now we have to run off to the federal government and ask the federal tax officials to look at the underground economy



and where all of the money we thought we were going to have has been disappearing to—that black hole, that place where people go around the tax system.

Going around the tax system is very harmful—maybe not so much for the person who's doing it, lest he or she gets caught, but if they don't get caught, who it's harmful to is to the province and to all of the things we need to do here: the schools that need to be built, the hospitals that need to be staffed, and everything else. Allowing an underground economy allows for unsafe workplaces, but it also is unfair to all of those citizens who are expected, year in and year out, to pay their taxes. We need more than just a promise from this government; we need something to be done. I don't know how the government intends to do that, having sent our tax auditors and our tax collectors away to the federal government, but certainly something needs to be done.

1720

We've asked for a simple way to keep \$1.3 billion in the province. That is, at the end of next year, when the corporate HST exemption is finally lifted and all those people can go down to Maple Leaf Gardens or to the Blue Jays game or the Rogers Centre or to fancy hotels or restaurants, and all those things that can all be written off, 13%—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** The new casino maybe, somebody is just saying to me, if there is one—I hope you're not right. I'm from Toronto. We don't want to see that here.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Put it in East York—

**Mr. Michael Prue:** No; we'll put it in Scarborough if you insist, but it's not going to East York. The honourable minister just said to put it in my riding in East York. I think that the honourable member would know that that is the one place in Toronto—that is the highest no vote for a casino in all of Toronto. I'm proud to say it's in my riding.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** The highest vote against the megacity as well.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** The highest vote against the megacity as well. We are independent people.

Okay, but what the minister did, one day before budget day: The Minister of Finance sent out a letter to the federal government asking them to review this largesse. This is a 13% loss on every corporate meal, hockey game, baseball game, theatre, anything that—any place where they could entertain or eat or drink or make merry. I don't think the province can afford it, and I don't think that people, ordinary people, can afford it either. Certainly everyone in this room, everyone on the street, everyone else who's not associated with a business who wants to go out to a restaurant meal has to pay the 13%. Everybody who goes to the baseball game has to pay the 13%. Everybody who does ordinary things with their money has to pay the 13%. Why do we give some a privilege of not doing it?

I honestly believe that sending a letter is not sufficient. I know it's not sufficient because, the very next day, a

question was asked in the House of Commons by the NDP finance critic, Peggy Nash. She stood up, and she asked a question of Jim Flaherty, whether he had received the letter from the Honourable Charles Sousa. Jim Flaherty answered, and you can look it up in Hansard, that yes, he had. The supplementary was, are you going to do anything about it? His answer was, no, he wasn't. So if that's the government action, to write a letter that is hopeless, I think that a whole lot more needs to—some tough negotiations need to take place, and \$1.3 billion is simply too much to lose.

Other issues we talked about: We talked about home care, and the government has come forward with \$200 million on this front. We didn't ask for that much money, but we did ask that the money come from savings, and we pointed out some places where the savings could be made. By capping exorbitant CEO salaries, by finding efficiencies within the administrative units of the LHINs and CHCs, we could actually find the amount of money that we thought would do it, which I think was \$30 million—\$30 million, and give a five-day guarantee. The government has thrown in \$200 million, but leaves the corporate salaries, leaves the LHINs' and CHCs' administrative efficiencies which we think could be made—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Cuts hospital budgets.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** —and cuts hospital budgets and closes beds.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Fires nurses.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My colleagues say, fires nurses, and all the other things that go.

We want a five-day home care guarantee, but there are other ways to do it other than are set out in this budget, and we're asking you to take a good hard look. Is it better to take money so that people who are hospital administrators don't earn twice as much as the Premier of this province? We've asked that it be capped at twice the Premier's salary. This is a Premier, whether you like her or not—and she has been my friend for many years—who earns about \$210,000 on a \$120-billion budget and tens of thousands of employees. I don't know how a hospital administrator in a small hospital would deserve more than twice that, quite frankly. We think money can be saved there, but we don't see it.

I'm mindful of my time here, Mr. Speaker.

Auto insurance: We think that drivers need a break. Auto insurance rates in Ontario are, by the government's own admission and by what is contained within the body of the 314 pages of the budget, the highest in all of Canada. They are outrageously high, and the closer you live to the city of Toronto or the GTHA, the higher you're going to pay. You pay not because you're a bad driver; you pay not because of any fault that you may have against your insurance; you pay because of where you live. It's auto insurance by postal code. It's auto insurance by age. It's auto insurance by sex. It's auto insurance in a whole bunch of guises—

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's illegal in California.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yes. In many places in the world, that's illegal.

What we have said to the government is that, "You make a whole lot of things good for the auto insurance industry about two years ago."

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** That's why they gave \$25,000 to each leadership candidate.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yes. My colleague here—and I should throw this in. Auto insurance, she says, donated \$25,000 to each of the five Liberal candidates running for the leadership and Premier of Ontario. I don't know whether that's true, but she tells me that and I'm going to take it at face value for the moment.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's true.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Okay. She says it's true. Okay.

But the reality is that, after the government changed all the laws to cut catastrophic insurance, after the government changed all the laws to make it much more difficult to commit fraud, after the government changed all the laws to make it much easier for them to earn money, they earned an additional \$2 billion in profit. All the NDP is saying is that this is a commodity on which you have no choice. If you are to drive in Ontario, then you must have insurance. If you must have insurance, it needs to be regulated. If the government is going to change the laws to, in effect, increase profits by \$2 billion, some or all of that has to be passed down to the consumer. We see something in the budget, but what we don't see is what we were asking for.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If the two members from Ottawa would like to have a reunion, maybe they'd like to go outside. It's getting a little loud over there, and I can't hear the member way, way down at the end.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Too many Leafs fans out there.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I don't care about the Leafs fans or the Ottawa Senators right now. You're going to have to keep it down. Thank you. This is not a hockey arena. Thank you.

Continue.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I thank you, Mr. Speaker, but you are a very fair referee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thanks.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Even if it isn't a hockey arena—both on and off the ice.

What I was saying is: We think that some of this money needs to be passed down to people who are suffering.

In terms of suffering, if you go to the west end of the city or out into Mississauga or Brampton, you will find that that is where the rates have gone up the most exponentially. If you talk to taxi drivers—and I had an opportunity for a rather lengthy taxi ride in the Windsor area a few weeks ago. I was going to an event from—I got off the train. I like to take the train to Windsor. Everybody should do that. It's a great way to travel. I got off the train, got into a taxi, and the taxi driver told me as he was driving along that he was very interested in what the NDP was doing in terms of rates.

He told me that the rates on his cab in the last two years had gone from \$7,000 a year to \$15,000 plus, and

then they wouldn't insure him anymore, even though he had never had an accident. He knew a broker. They had to go through several insurance companies in order to get one at about \$12,000 a year in order for him to continue to do his job, drive his cab and make a living for himself and his family.

I listened to that with some degree of horror because these are the same companies that are making \$2 billion in profit, and that poor man was talking about how he was going to have to get out of a business where he owned his own cab, where he drove people in and around the Windsor-Detroit area, and where he was going to have a hard time making a living. He was talking about going into other fields, because he didn't know at this point what else to do. I told him I would raise his case here in the Legislature, and I've just done it. But also, I told him that we would do everything within our power to make sure that the insurance rates were kept affordable.

1730

I am mindful that the insurance companies still think that there's fraud out there, and perhaps there is. I am still mindful of the fact that they think that catastrophic injury needs to be better defined, and they're waiting for some court cases to come along which will give better definition to that impairment. But at the same time, ordinary people need to make sure that their costs are going down and not up.

As I said at the beginning, all of the stuff that's happening to ordinary people is pretty bad. They're suffering, and they're looking at almost anything in order to save money, in order to make sure that they can accomplish what they need to in their individual lives.

We've looked at the budget and what it had to say about transit, and—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Not much.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Not too much about transit. They're going to change HOV lanes to HOT lanes. For anybody watching, wondering what the difference is between an HOV lane and an HOT lane, it's pretty simple. An HOV lane means that if you have two or three or four passengers, you can go into one lane, and it's usually not as crowded during the rush hour. It really, really encourages people to carpool and get people out of their own cars and get two or three drivers into one car, as opposed to driving two or three cars along the other lanes. It's a really good environmental decision. It helps to ease congestion. We all understand what HOV lanes are. HOT lanes are very different.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Lexus lanes.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** In the NDP, we like to call them Lexus lanes, because it doesn't matter how many people are in the car: If you pay a fee, you can go in the fast lane. I don't know how this is going to be administered—whether or not they're going to have their special transponders, or whether they're going to have a big sticker on the back saying, "I'm a Lexus driver. Get used to it." I don't know how this is going to be enforced.

But we have to wonder whether or not this is going to help ordinary people. It means that they're going to be



forced to drive in the slow lanes, and their quality of life is not going to go up with HOT lanes.

I'm looking for the government to answer. Are you taking lanes out of the 400-series highways? Are you taking a lane out? Because most of them don't have HOV lanes in them at present. I know the QEW does, and some of the others in the Toronto area.

But if you start adding them to the 401, which is eight lanes in both directions through Toronto—if one of those suddenly becomes an HOT lane, it means that all the cars that used to use that will be squeezed into the other seven, which will cause even more congestion, so you can make some money. We need to know about this. The government has not come clean on what they're going to do on HOT lanes. Before you get too far down the transit road, please explain that one.

And while you're at it, we're all waiting for Metrolinx. Even the city of Toronto is looking for Metrolinx. Yesterday, they came to their wisdom by one vote, and they've decided to put in a submission. Metrolinx will be giving—and, we understand, has already given—the government the heads-up on what they're going to be recommending. We've asked questions in the Legislature. The Premier has denied seeing it, but we know it's there. It has already been reported as having been given over to government authorities, the first draft of where they're going.

We need to know what that is. We need to know what it is, because the budget says that this is going to be included later. This may be a lot of money for the people of Ontario, and we need to know how much, if anything, is going to be charged to them.

Social assistance—I've got four minutes left. Social assistance: It's been a shame in Ontario, what has happened to people on social assistance. It was reduced by some 32% by Mike Harris in 1995. As bad as that was—as bad as that was—those are looked upon as good days, because this government in the last 10 years has not increased social assistance to keep up with the rate of inflation. There's a chart here in this book, if somebody wants to look it up, a chart that shows down, down, down, down, down, down—the spending power of people on Ontario Works and ODSP since 1995. So as bad as the deepest, darkest days of Mike Harris were, the deepest, darkest days of Kathleen Wynne are worse for people on social assistance.

You know, you can give them 1%. You gave them 1% last year, you gave them 1% the year before, and zero the year before that. One year, I remember, you were really magnanimous and gave them 2%, but inflation topped every one of those every year, so every year it's gotten worse.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** The community start-up fund is gone. There's nothing in here about the special diet allowance—

*Interjection:* Discretionary funding.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Discretionary funds. The government did agree to increase asset levels, which is a good

thing, in line with what Frances Lankin and Munir Sheikh talked about, but there's so much more that can be done and should have been done, and it's not, and people are way behind.

The wait-list for social housing has gone right through the roof. It's gone up 24% under this government—the wait-list is up 24% in the last 10 years. No social housing has been built. The wait-list is enormous. In fact, if you are a person with four children who requires a three-bedroom unit, in Ontario today, the average waiting list is 24 years. Your kids will all be grown up, and if you're lucky, graduated and married and gone before your turn comes up. What kind of social housing policy is that?

I listened to the minister today answer the fluff question from the back bench, saying how wonderful they are and how they're going to work with the federal government. In 10 years, they haven't, and this budget doesn't say much about it at all.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Inclusionary zoning.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yes, a simple thing like inclusionary zoning, which has been requested by the NDP and by my colleague from Parkdale–High Park, would allow cities that opportunity.

In my last two minutes—there were other things, but I'm running out of time—I'd just like to talk about the announcement made by the NDP today about a financial accountability officer and a financial accountability office. It would be modelled after the budget officer of the federal government. They had such a person, a remarkable man, in the person of Kevin Page, and we think that we need to do the same thing. We know that this may cost a little bit of money, but we think it is important for all of the things that are contained in the budget, all of the things we want to see, all of the things we're hoping this government might do, to see that the money is actually expended wisely. We have watched, to our horror, over the last couple of years as scandal after scandal seems to fall wherever this government goes—around eHealth, around Ornge, and most recently about the gas plants. Money is being wasted that we cannot afford to waste. Money is being spent, you know, for these fly-by-night P3 schemes in energy, in health and everything else, where the only losers are the people of Ontario.

The friends of the Liberal government, the people they want to contract out to, all seem to do fine. The lawyers all seem to be doing fine. But we think if we have a financial accounting officer who has the same rights and authorities of the other legislative officers, like the environment, like the Auditor General and like others—the Ombudsman—that we can get a handle. We are asking—we are more than asking. We are demanding that a financial accountability officer be part of this budget process to ensure that the people's money is spent wisely, because if we have no guarantee that it's going to be spent wisely, then it is very difficult to trust what is contained within the body of the budget, those things we like, those things we don't. We want to make sure that the government is held to account for every single penny.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Mr. Speaker, this budget was prepared after consultation with more than 600 people across Ontario—

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Six hundred thousand.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Sorry, 600,000. It's a good thing you were there to correct me—600,000 people across Ontario, and it reflects their needs and provides positive solutions to challenges they face.

I participated in one of these town hall consultations with the Minister of Finance and some of my colleagues in the Ottawa area, and it was a very informative and interesting consultation that we did. We had over 20,000 callers on the line, and they all came with very interesting questions and concerns. I can say to you that their questions and concerns were addressed in the budget.

1740

We've heard about people on social assistance who want to be supported when they want to go back to work and that they want to keep more money of their earnings to help them to go through these difficult times.

We've heard about young people who wanted to find a job, and they had difficulty. They graduated with a nice degree, and they had difficulty finding a job. I must add that Ontario is not unique; in some European countries, youth unemployment is very high.

I will continue to address the budget. I'm the next speaker, so stay tuned. I will speak on the budget later on.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Let me read a little from my recent op-ed piece, paraphrasing the title of a popular movie. I call this "My Big Fat Greek Ontario."

"After listening to the Wynne Liberals' first budget, I doubt that anyone is cheering 'Opa!' Sadly, Ontario may well be on its way to a Greek-style meltdown.

"You don't need to be an economist to know that Ontario is where Greece was in the 1980s. From 1984 to 1994, Greece's net debt to GDP ratio went from 37% to 66%.

"Today, Ontario is at 37% and if we maintain our current spending rate, we too will reach 66% by 2019.

"Last year's credit rating downgrade was a siren call to Ontario: Fix this now or it will destroy you. Instead, last year we saw spending actually up \$3.6 billion, while revenue was up only \$2.6 billion.

"We ... don't have a revenue problem in Ontario. We have a spending problem.

"Our debt is" due to "the refusal of the government to control spending and their lack of political will to balance the budget.

"Low interest rates make carrying this large debt possible but even the slightest increase in rates will induce trauma upon Ontario's finances....

"Over the last nine years, our GDP was up 3.3% while our program spending went up 6.6%.

"Had we just matched our spending to the GDP rate, last year's budget would have been \$91 billion instead of \$115 billion—and yes, that would have meant a surplus as opposed to a deficit....

"Ontario is poised to become the next Greek tragedy."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's once again an honour to stand in this House and talk about Ontario's finances and particularly to comment on my colleague from Beaches—East York. Actually, he's done what a—a lot of things are missing in this House, because on one side it's all good, and on this side it's all doom. On the Conservative side, it's doom and gloom, and they want to cut. They want to balance the budget, but not once have they said where they're going to do it. What my colleague has said is—where credit is due he has given it, and where there are problems, he has also stated them.

It's not a surprise that one of the biggest problems with this budget and with past budgets from the Liberal government is that it has been very easy to promise. One of their great promises is \$100 million for infrastructure for rural and northern Ontario. Rural and northern Ontario is a big place, and that \$100 million might not go that far, especially when you're announcing it in every town across this great province.

The problem is, no one really knows if that money is going to be spent. That's the biggest problem with all of these, and that's why one of the biggest things we asked for in this budget is we wanted accountability. The Liberals didn't put any accountability in it, so that's why we propose today to put a financial accountability office into this Legislature, because the auditor looks at numbers after they're spent, when it's too late. It's a job that needs to be done. This officer would look at the numbers before and while they're being spent to be able to put their red flags up before billions are wasted.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** I always appreciate these long opportunities to hear the member from Beaches—East York. He made comments on many, many issues in the budget. So, in two minutes, you can't touch very much, but I would like to mention youth unemployment.

On page 40 of the budget, it shows that the employment rate of youth 15 to 24 years is about 50%. It's been going down ever since the recession. It follows a line similar to the OECD. The OECD is about 11% lower, but they're parallel. This is a tragedy for North America; it's a tragedy for Europe; it's a tragedy everywhere for youth.

Studies show that periods of youth unemployment can have long-term social and economic consequences. So that's why we're coming up with a major expenditure in many ways: Ontario Youth Employment Fund to expand employment opportunities for youth across Ontario, Ontario Youth Entrepreneurship Fund, Ontario Youth Innovation Fund, Business-Labour Connectivity and Training Fund.



I know that there were a lot of incentives—at least a lot of encouragement—from the NDP in order to concentrate on this issue. It's so important, and I hope that's one that we're able to get through this period and to start helping youth who need a lot of help.

The other thing I noticed is that the Poverty Reduction Strategy of child poverty—it's been going down. Not enough, but certainly the contribution we make that's going up \$100 a month is going to help a lot—that child credit. In any case, those dollars are for the kids—it's showing up in our child poverty, and it's an excellent way to go. So, thank you very much for all the good ideas that you expounded today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The honourable member from Beaches–East York has two minutes.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I'd like to thank the people who commented: the Minister of Community Safety; the members from Nipissing, Timiskaming–Cochrane and Ottawa–Orléans.

Dealing first with the member from Ottawa–Orléans, you twigged something there, and I should have said something within my hour. Child poverty has, in fact, gone down—not as much as what we would have wanted, because they are one year behind; the government is one year behind on its commitments to get the money up to where it should be. People who were here during the budget debate came and spoke to me about how disappointed they are that the government is not going to meet its 25-in-5 target because that money has not been forthcoming. If the government could find any such money, it might be a good thing.

To the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane: You're absolutely right to talk about the north. I think the \$100 million is not going to go very far.

The Minister of Community Safety, I thank you for your comments.

I'd like to spend my last minute—the member from Nipissing, I didn't speak about Greece at all, and I'm not sure that you should have spoken about it either, unless you knew a little bit about that country. Greece is facing huge turmoil. Greece is in a very unique and unstable position because they have euros and not their own currency. They have been unable to balance it. They have been unable to get the kinds of loans and guarantees they needed, primarily from Germany and from France. The Greeks are in this circumstance because they went through multi years of government by a party known as New Democracy, which has nothing to do with my party, but is a right-wing government—exactly like the things that you are expounding. They're in exactly the circumstance they're in because they followed the dictates that you're trying to say are good for Ontario. The reason that they're in such turmoil today is because they voted too often for New Democracy in Greece, and that's the reality.

1750

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Speaker, I would just like to correct my record. It was the Ontario child benefit, of course, that I was talking to, not a tax credit.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Further debate.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** It gives me great pleasure to speak today on the budget from the new Premier Premier Wynne, and the finance minister, Minister Sousa. I will say to you that probably the most important thing that we see in this budget is the fact that we are going to balance the budget by 2017-18. It was said often that how the money that is being spent to pay the interest on the money that we borrowed to administer the province—if we were able to use it for public service, we would be able to offer more money to our colleges and universities, we would be able to support our students who go to college and university, and we would be able to bring back the grant for those francophones who live away in the province and want to study in a larger city and have extra expenses.

That \$9 billion that we spend every year could also be spent in hiring more health professionals to provide good service in the community for those people who want to stay at home longer—our seniors, for example, who don't want to go into long-term care but want to stay at home.

My mom is 89 years old. She's lucky because she still lives at home. She lives at home with the help of three wonderful people. They each take their turns to stay with her, so she has someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's a good thing that she has put money aside so that she is able to pay for all these good services, because my mom will refuse to go to long-term care. She wants to stay at home, and she wants to have care at home. But for those who are not able to pay for these services, if we did not have to pay the interest on the debt, we would be able to offer these good services.

A feature of this budget, in co-operation with our colleagues in the third party, is that we have added more money into the budget for home services, for care that seniors want in their own home. It's wonderful. We could do more; Ontarians are aging, so we will need more service, not less service. Again, the seniors in my community don't want to go to the hospital if they don't need to go to the hospital. They want to be back in their homes with the support that they need.

What we have also added into the budget—and this is very dear to my heart, as a former Minister of Community and Social Services—is we have increased the assistance for those who are on social assistance and those who are on ODSP. What the previous government did in slashing 22% of the social assistance income when they were in power—we're trying this time around to try to compensate for this large difference between those who are on OW and those who are on ODSP.

Those who are on OW are not on OW because they want to be on OW, on welfare. It is because there is an unfortunate situation that occurred in their life, and they need to rely on this assistance. Those who don't have

children are receiving around \$600 per month. Just imagine, \$600 per month. The Attorney General repeats often and reminds us: What can you do with \$600 a month? This budget will help to—not compensate totally, but at least it's an increase in the right direction to help those who are on social assistance.

What I also like in the budget is an increase in the envelope for Ontarians who have developmental disabilities. They need a lot of help, especially after they graduate from high school. They don't have all the programs that we all wish were in existence to offer services to those with developmental disabilities. During the day, if their parents are working, their parents cannot take care of them, so at least they will have a place to send them to spend the day, to do all sorts of activities, and the parents can go about their daily work and not be concerned about where their son or daughter is, or receive a phone call at 10 o'clock in the morning that their daughter is lost somewhere in town and doesn't know where she is. I heard too many of these situations when I was the Minister of Community and Social Services.

I'm very pleased with the two commissioners I have appointed to review social assistance—Frances Lankin and Munir Sheikh—and I want to thank them. What an ideal team: the Honourable Frances Lankin, who had experience as Minister of Health and as Minister of Economic Development under the New Democratic Party; and Munir Sheikh, who was the chief economist for Statistics Canada. Together, the two have reviewed welfare and social assistance and have made recommendations, so I want to publicly thank them for the

excellent work they have done. We have listened to them, and we're moving—not to put together all their recommendations at once, but it's a move in the right direction.

Social assistance, people with developmental disabilities—I've heard parents being so concerned. Under our watch, we have created the Passport program, which comes to the assistance of these individuals and of parents who want to have activities for their sons and daughters who are developmentally disabled. I've seen so much innovation on the part of the parents. In Nipissing, for instance, parents pooled their Passport money and hired a team to develop programs for their sons and daughters. Of course, there is a lot of volunteer work that is done by the parents, friends and families because they cannot pay the full price for every activity. There is a lot of volunteerism that is done to help.

My heart goes out to these parents because their concern is: "Now I'm alive, but when I'm not there, when I have to go to a seniors' home, what will happen to my son or daughter?" One thing that I used to tell them: When you are not able to take care of them and you have to go into long-term care, I promise you that the government will take over.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you, Minister.

It being 6 o'clock, this debate will continue from where it left off when it's called again.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craiton, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
<b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Brampton–Springdale	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
<b>Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	London West / London-Ouest	
Vacant	Windsor–Tecumseh	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Grant Crack, Kim Craitor  
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris  
Rob Leone, Bill Mauro  
Taras Natyshak, Taras Natyshak  
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong  
Dipika Damerla, Steven Del Duca  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Monte McNaughton  
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna H. Cansfield  
Bas Balkissoon, Rick Bartolucci  
Sarah Campbell, Donna H. Cansfield  
Mike Colle, Rosario Marchese  
Laurie Scott, Todd Smith  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Laura Albanese, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Joe Dickson, Jim McDonell  
Phil McNeely, Paul Miller  
Randy Pettapiece, Monique Taylor  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong  
Steven Del Duca, Bob Delaney  
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren  
Rob E. Milligan, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jonah Schein  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Bas Balkissoon, Gilles Bisson  
Steve Clark, Mike Colle  
Garfield Dunlop, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Cindy Forster, Lisa MacLeod  
Bill Mauro  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norm Miller  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett  
Toby Barrett, Dipika Damerla  
France Gélinas, Helena Jaczek  
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller  
Jerry J. Ouellette, Shafiq Qaadri  
Jagmeet Singh  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof  
Margarett R. Best, Vic Dhillon  
Joe Dickson, Randy Hillier  
Rod Jackson, Monte Kwinter  
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Margaret R. Best  
Ted Chudleigh, Cheri DiNovo  
Ernie Hardeman, Helena Jaczek  
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha  
Jane McKenna  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short



*Continued from back cover*

### **Power plants**

Ms. Laurie Scott.....	1878
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1879

### **Environmental research**

Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1879
Hon. Laurel C. Broten.....	1880

### **Employment standards**

Mr. Mike Colle.....	1880
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	1880

### **Power plants**

Mr. Todd Smith.....	1881
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1881

### **Toronto waterfront**

Mr. Rosario Marchese.....	1881
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	1881

### **Wearing of bow tie stickers**

Hon. Jeff Leal.....	1882
---------------------	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Hon. Teresa Piruzza.....	1882
Ms. Lisa MacLeod.....	1882
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1882
Hon. John Milloy.....	1883

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

### **Renewable energy**

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	1883
---------------------------	------

### **Local economy**

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	1883
-------------------------	------

### **Family services**

Mr. Bas Balkissoon.....	1883
-------------------------	------

### **Battle of the Atlantic anniversary**

Mr. Robert Bailey.....	1883
------------------------	------

### **Driver licences**

Ms. Cindy Forster.....	1884
------------------------	------

### **Corriere Canadese**

Mrs. Laura Albanese.....	1884
--------------------------	------

### **Graeme Murray**

Mr. Norm Miller.....	1884
----------------------	------

### **Out of the Darkness Walk**

Mr. Bill Mauro.....	1885
---------------------	------

### **Amateur baseball**

Mrs. Jane McKenna.....	1885
------------------------	------

### **Bruce Crozier**

Mr. Ted Arnott.....	1885
Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1886
Hon. Teresa Piruzza.....	1887
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1888

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

### **Fighting Hunger with Local Food Act, 2013, Bill 68, Mr. Bailey / Loi de 2013 visant à combattre la faim à l'aide d'aliments locaux, projet de loi 68,**

#### **M. Bailey**

First reading agreed to.....	1888
Mr. Robert Bailey.....	1888

## **STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

### **Emergency preparedness / Sécurité civile**

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	1888
Mr. John Yakubuski.....	1889
Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1890

## **PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

### **Water quality**

Mr. John O'Toole.....	1890
-----------------------	------

### **Prorogation**

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	1891
-------------------------	------

### **Services for the developmentally disabled**

Mr. Randy Pettapiece.....	1891
---------------------------	------

### **Employment practices**

Mr. Michael Prue.....	1891
-----------------------	------

### **Horse racing industry**

Mr. Robert Bailey.....	1892
------------------------	------

### **Workplace insurance**

Mr. Steve Clark.....	1892
----------------------	------

### **Tire disposal**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	1892
-------------------------	------

### **Lyme disease**

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	1892
---------------------------	------

### **Shingles vaccine**

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	1893
-----------------------	------

### **Tire disposal**

Ms. Laurie Scott.....	1893
-----------------------	------

### **Ontario College of Trades**

Mr. Steve Clark.....	1893
----------------------	------

**Correctional facilities**

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson..... 1893

**Landfill**

Mr. Ernie Hardeman ..... 1893

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

**Prosperous and Fair Ontario Act (Budget  
Measures), 2013, Bill 65, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2013  
pour un Ontario prospère et équitable (mesures  
budgétaires), projet de loi 65, M. Sousa**

Mr. John O'Toole ..... 1894  
Ms. Catherine Fife ..... 1896  
Mr. Bob Delaney ..... 1897  
Mr. John Yakabuski..... 1897  
Mr. Michael Prue..... 1897  
Mr. John O'Toole ..... 1898  
Mr. Michael Prue..... 1898  
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur..... 1907  
Mr. Victor Fedeli ..... 1907  
Mr. John Vanthof..... 1907  
Mr. Phil McNeely ..... 1907  
Mr. Michael Prue ..... 1908  
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur..... 1908  
Second reading debate deemed adjourned..... 1909



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 8 May 2013 / Mercredi 8 mai 2013

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

<b>Non-profit Housing Co-operatives Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013, Bill 14, Mrs. Jeffrey / Loi de 2013 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif, projet de loi 14, Mme Jeffrey</b>	
Mr. Michael Harris.....	1859
Miss Monique Taylor.....	1860
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1860
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1861
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1861
Mr. Michael Harris.....	1861
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	1861
Mr. Jonah Schein.....	1863
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	1863
Mr. John Yakabuski.....	1863
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1864
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson.....	1864
Ms. Laurie Scott.....	1864
Mr. Bill Mauro.....	1866
Mr. John Yakabuski.....	1866
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	1866
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1866
Ms. Laurie Scott.....	1866
Mr. Rob E. Milligan.....	1867
Ms. Sarah Campbell.....	1868
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	1868
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	1869
Miss Monique Taylor.....	1869
Mr. Rob E. Milligan.....	1869
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	1869

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Jeff Leal.....	1870
Mr. Frank Klees.....	1870
Hon. Teresa Piruzza.....	1870
Mr. Peter Shurman.....	1870
Mr. Paul Miller.....	1870
Hon. Michael Gravelle.....	1870
Mr. John O'Toole.....	1870
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	1870
Hon. Michael Chan.....	1870
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1870

Mr. Bill Mauro.....	1870
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	1870
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	1870
Mr. Rob E. Milligan.....	1870
Hon. Eric Hoskins.....	1870
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	1871
Hon. Reza Moridi.....	1871
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	1871

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

### Power plants

Mr. Tim Hudak.....	1871
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1871

### Power plants

Mr. Steve Clark.....	1872
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1872
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1872

### Government accountability

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1873
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1873

### Government accountability

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	1874
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1874

### Power plants

Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	1875
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1875
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1875

### Power plants

Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1875
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1876

### Affordable housing

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	1876
Hon. Linda Jeffrey.....	1876

### Power plants

Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	1877
Hon. John Gerretsen.....	1877

### Cancer treatment

Ms. Cindy Forster.....	1877
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	1877

### Infrastructure program funding

Mr. Kim Craiton.....	1878
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	1878
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	1878

Continued on inside back cover











